

MINVCIUS

FELIX

His dialogue called

OCTAVIVS.

Containing a defence
of Christian
religion.

Translated by
RICHARD JAMES
of C. C. C. OXON.



OXFORD,

Printed by LEONARD
LICHFIELD, for Thomas
Huggins. 1636.

MINV CIVI

FELIX

His dialogue called

OCTAVIUS

Containing a defence
of Christian
religion

Translated by
RICHARD LANE
OF C.C.C. OXFORD

OXFORD

Printed by J. LEONARD
at the Lion Press in
St. Pauls Church-yard



TO MY
LADY

COTTON,

Wife unto

S^r ROBERT COTTON.

of Conington.



ADAME I

have receiued

many favours

from you, and doe in

thankfullnesse present

** 2 vnto*

THE EPISTLE

unto your Ladshippe
this my translation of
Minutius Felix his di-
alogue which consists of
three speakers, M. Mi-
nucius Felix, Cecilius
Natalis, and Octavius
Ianuarius. The one is
judge, the other produ-
ces in a flourishing ora-
tion all the arguments of
the Gentiles against
Christian religion, and
the third makes unto
them such cleare an-
swere

DEDICATORY.

swear as I believe it
will reioyce a Christian
reader to vnderstand.
Wherefore as the better
sort of Greekes, Romans,
Italian, French and
others haue taken a
pleasure to render vnto
their owne nation what
they found worthy in
other languages, I in
this litle peece haue fol-
lowed their example, an-
necting vnto it some-
thing of my owne, for
nearenesse

THE EPISTLE

nearenesse of subject,
pray Madame let either
have your acceptance,
and know me

Your faithfull servant

RICHARD JAMES.



To the Reader.

WHosoener peruseth
this litle booke or
any other of aunci-
ent times, it behooues him to vse
sobriety in his vnderstanding,
least hee miscarry either in do-
ctrine or discipline. For exam-
ple, Minutius saith, the primi-
tiue Christians had no Tem-
ples: you must not therefore
collect, that wee ought to wor-
ship God only in fields or pri-
uate houses. They had not in-
deed, Delubra, Temples of Ido-
latry: wherein the Gentiles used
as Prudentius hath it deasci-
ato supplicare stipiti to make
their orizons to a peece of
kewd timber, yet as it is appa-
rant out of all antiquitie, they
had according to the sufferance
of

To the Reader.

of times, κρείαυς houses built
to the honour of our Lord and
Saviour, κρείαυς πόλεως, Ca-
thedrall Churches: οἰκουμένης,
houses of prayer, oratories:
βασιλικὰς stately piles of build-
ing, in which they did mee-
to solemnize the duties of Chri-
stianitie, and to heare the reli-
gious instructions of their pre-
lates: More for the present I
haue not to say. Let all things be
done decently and in good order.
This is a necessary remembrance
from the Apostle, and so I wish
the health of body and minde.



M. MINVCIUS
FELIX HIS
OCTAVIVS.

COnsidering and calling to mind the memorie of my good & most faithfull companion *Octavius*, I was posselt with so great a sweetnesse and affection of the man, that I euen seemed to returne vnto times past, and not only to recollect our con-
A versation

2 *M. Minucius Felix*

versation by way of remembrance; the contemplation of him being not so much withdrawn from my eyes, as it is enfolded in my breast, and in most senses. And certainly the worth of that excellent holy man was such, as it must of necessity leaue with me an infinite desire of him. He had a flagrancie of loue towards me, our wits bore comfort as well for recreation as businesse; and we ever will'd and nill'd, the same things. You would haue thought us one soule divided into two bodies. He was alone private of my loues, and companion of my errors; and when, the mist breaking, out of profound darknesse, I did rise vnto the light of wisdome, and truth,

his Octavius. 3

truth, so farre he was from forsaking my societie, as to his greater glory, he did runne before, to direct me the way. And when my thoughts had runne over all the age of our familiar acquaintance, the intention of my minde did more especially abide vpon that discourse of his, by which, in a most graue disputation, he did reforme vnto true religion *Cecilius* then adhering to superstitious vanities. For cause of businesse, and to see me, he had taken a iourney to Rome, leauing his house, wife and children, and that which is in children most louely, their yet innocent yeares, when they striue at halfe wordes, in a language more pleasing, by the

A 2 pretty

4 *M. Minucius Felix*

pretty breach of their tripping
tongues. I cannot with words
expresse vnto you, how this ar-
rivall of his did raiſh me into
an exceſſe of gladneſſe, eſpeci-
ally the vnexpected preſence
of a moſt deare friend: Then
after a day or two, when fre-
quent vſance had taken off the
impatience of our deſire,
when wee had learned from
mutuall relation what wee
knew not of each other in
time of abſence, we did agree
to view *Oſtia*, a moſt pleaſant
Cittie, becauſe for drying vp
the humours of my body a
faire and appoſite cure it is, to
walke by the waues of the
Sea. It was vacation from all
judiciall cares, by reaſon of
the Vintage; and the approach-

ing

his Octavius. M

ing of Autumne, did some
what temper the aire from e-
stival heat. So then vpon break
of day, when we went forth
to pace vpon the shoare, the
aire gently breathing vege-
tation to our members, and
the soft sand with a fine plea-
sure somewhat yeelded to the
impression of our feet, *Cecili-
us* spying the image of *Sera-
pis*, as superstitious people are
wont to doe, lifting his hands
vnto his mouth, made them
kisse his lips. Then spake *Octa-
uius*. Tis not the part of a
good man, brother *Marke*, to
neglect him who is alwaies
both at home and abroad euer
by your side; as that you should
suffer him through vulgar
blindnesse, in cleare day to
A 3. stumble.

6 *M. Minucius Felix*

stumble at stones, howsoeuer
they bee shaped into image,
smoothed with oile, and crow-
ned with flowers; when you
know that the infamie of such
error, doth no lesse fall on you
then him. And with such dis-
course of his, hauing passed o-
uer halfe the space of the Cit-
tie, we had now gotten vpon
the open shoare, where the
gentle wane, as if it tooke plea-
sure to strow vs a faire walke,
did leuell the outward sands.
The Sea when the winds are
all laid, is neuerthelesse rest-
lesse in it selfe, and although
it came not on, with white
foaming billowes, yet had they
a curl'd wallowing course.
There wandering vp and
downe, wee did much solace
our

our felues, and did endanger
the overflowing of our feete,
in the brinck of the Sea, which
would play vp her waues, and
againē flyding back, receiue
them into her owne bosome.
So in a stealing quiet pace ma-
king forward, we forgot our
way with discourse, along the
easie bending of the shoare;
and this discourse was, a nar-
ration of *Octavius*, opening
the course of navigation. But
when we had thus talked out
a sufficient journie, turning
our steps, wee did againe pace
ouer the same way. And when
we came vnto the place where
little boates drawne vp from
the water lay on rowlers, to
preferue them from occasion
of rotting, wee saw Children
A 4 sportfully

Milk
and
Drake

8 *M. Minucius Felix*

sportfully contending who
should skeere shells farthest
vpon the top of the Sea. The
sport is to gather vp from the
shoare a round shell, smoothed
with the beating of the waues;
and taking of it flat in their
fingers to make long circling
ejaculations vpon the water,
the shell razing, gliding, or
leaping there, so long as it hath
force of motion; and that child
beares the victorie whose
shell doth glide farthest, or
leape more often. When
therefore all of vs were taken
with the pleasure of this spe-
ctacle, *Cecilius* only intended
nothing, neither would hee
laugh to see this contention of
the children, but by silence
anxietie and by-walking, also

Yllidnoql

† A

in

his Octavius. 9

in his very visage hee seem'd afflicted with something which wee knew not. Then quoth I, what is this matter? why doe we not find in *Cicilius* his wonted alacritie? why doe we not see that cheerefull countenance which hee vseth to preserue in times of greater residue? Then hee replied, I haue indeed beene a good while bitterly vexed, and bitten with our *Octavius* his words, when inuestiuely hee reprov'd you of negligence, that he might more cunningly put on me the greater scorne of ignorance. Therefore I will goe farther. I haue to doe with *Octavius* vpon the whole subject, if he be willing to dispute it with me, who am a man of

A. 5.

that:

10 *M. Minucius Felix*

that sect which hee so much
vndervalues. Surely he will
quickly know how farre more
easie it is to prate amongst
Gossips, then to trie his wise-
dome with a man of an oppo-
site vnderstanding. Then on
this terrace of rocks, made to
defend the incurſion of the
sea from the bathes, let vs sit
downe, that we may both rest
from our journey, and the bet-
ter intend our disputation. He
had no sooner spoken the
word, but we sate downe, I
in the midst, ambitiously
protected with them on ei-
ther side, not by way of obse-
quiousnesse, order, or honour,
(since freindship doth finde or
make equality amongst men),
but as an Vmpire, the better
to

to heare both, and to keepe
two earnest disputants asun-
der. Then *Cecilius* thus began.
Although brother *Marcus*
those things of which we shall
make enquirie, seeme not to
you ambiguous, who having
beene diligently conversant
in both kinds of life, haue refu-
sed the one, and approued the
other, neuerthelesse for the
present, you are so to order
your minde, that you like an
equall iudge, hold the skales,
propensive unto neither side,
least the sentence you shal passe,
rather proceede from your
owne apprehension then the
force of our arguments.
Wherefore if you sit here as a
stranger, and ignorant of either
partie, it will be no businesse
to

12 *M. Minucius Felix*

to shew, that all thinges amongst men are doubtfull, vncertaine, pendulous, and rather probable then true, to the lesse wonder of many, who wearie in the cleere search of truth, rather quickly yeeld to any opinion, then persevere in a pertinacious diligence, to find it out. Wherefore with indignation or pitie we ought to looke on some, who vnstudied, illiterate, vncunning in all arts but fordid, dare peremptorily decree maximes of Divine Maiestie, wherein Philosophie it selfe, through so many ages and variety of sects can but yet deliberate: And not without cause; since humane mediocrity, is so farre from reaching Divine things, as those things

things which are aboue vs in
heauen suspended and subli-
mated, or hid in the profundi-
ty of the earth beneath vs, no
abilitie haue we to know, tis
not permitted to search, nei-
ther religious to question. And
enough happy, and enough
prudent, we may deservedly
be accounted, if according to
the old Oracle of wisedome,
we be familiar in the know-
ledge of our selues. But since
ouer indulgent to a madde
vaine curiositie, we will needs
wander beyond the limits of
our meane condition, and tran-
scend with a bold desire euen
heaven and the starres them-
selues, let vs see whether we
may a little stay this error
with an earnest and vndaunted
disqui-

14 *M. Minucius Felix*

disquisition. If the seeds of the elements doe naturally come together, and condensate themselves, why must God be here an author? If by casuall concursion, the members of the vniuerse doe ioyne, are digested, and formed, why must Divinitie contriue the worke? If fire kindle the starres, and the celestially matter sublime it selfe, if the earth haue foundation in his owne weight, and the sea flow out of moisture, why is this religion, this feare, this superstition? Man and every creature that is borne, hath his being from breath and nourishment; this is the voluntary concretion of the elements into which man and every creature else is divided,

vided, dissolved, and scattered.
So all things returne into the
fountaine of themselves, with
a naturall revolution, without
artificer, judge, or author. So
we every day see new Sunnes,
from the elementarie seeds
of fire collected together, new
cloudes, growing from the ex-
haled vapours of the earth;
these rise, thicken, and coagu-
late in the aire, then with their
owne weight fall downe into
flux of raine, blast of wind,
and storme of haile, or in colli-
sion make rowling claps of
thunder, flashes of lightning;
and if boult fly out, they fall
any where, rush on moun-
taines, beare downe trees,
touch Temples no lesse then
profane houses, strike impious
men

16 *M. Minucius Felix*

men, and often the most religious. What shall I speake of tempests alike various and vncertaine, without order, without examination, hurling impetuously where they light. In shipwrack alike destiny mixeth the good with the bad, and confounds their merits; fire discernes not the innocent from the guiltie, and when any tract of heauen is infected with pestilent contagion, all die without difference. When the furie of warre rageth, the best people fall soonest, also in peace many times wickednesse is not only equaliz'd but exalted aboue vertue, and in many wicked, a man knowes not whether he should more hate their impietie, or
blesse

blesse their fortune. But if the world were govern'd by Divine providence and authority, neuer should *Phalaris* and *Dionysius* merit a kingdome, *Rutilius* and *Camillus* bee rewarded with banishment, and *Socrates* with poyson. Behold the trees laden with fruite, the fieldes white unto the harvest, these and the full-growne vintage are corrupted with showers, or beaten downe with haile. So is truth either hidden and kept to vs vncertaine, or that which is most credible from these divers lubricities of chance, fortune free from all lawes doth seignorize the world. When therefore either fortune is certaine, or nature vncertaine, how much better
is

18 *M. Minucius Felix*

is it, and more venerable, to
receiue the discipline of our
Aunceltors for tradition of
truth, obserue the religions left
vs by them, to adore those
Gods, which thy Parents haue
from thy youth familiarly
taught thee to feare and know,
then to sit in judgment vpon
the Gods. Let vs beleene our
first Parents, who yet in the
simple infancie of the world,
did deserue to haue the Gods,
or their Princes more favou-
rable vnto them. And by this
meanes through all Empires,
Provinces, Citties, we see
them haue their severall nati-
onall sacred rites, and to wor-
ship their municipall Gods.
the *Eleusnians* *Ceres*, the
Phrygians, the great Mother,
the

the *Epidaurians* *Æsculapius*,
the *Chaldeans* *Belus*, the *Sy-*
rians *Astarte*, the *Tauricians*
Diana, the *Gaules* *Mercurie*,
the *Romans* all. So hath their
power and authoritie subdued
the circumference of the
whole world, propagated their
Empire beyond the course of
the Sunne, and limits of the
Ocean; Whilest with their
armes they exercise a religi-
ous vertue; whilest they forti-
fied the cittie with sacred re-
ligions, chaste Virgins, many
honours and titles of Priest-
hood: whilest beseiged, and all
taken but the Capitoll, they
stil worship those Gods, which
some would in anger haue
dispised, & through the troupes
of the *Gaules*, wondering at
their

20 *M. Minucius Felix*

their bold superstition, they
passe naked of weapons, but
armed with a worship of reli-
gion: whilest now captiue in
their owne hostile walls, and
victory pursuing execution on
them, they still reverence
their conquer'd Deities;
whil'st from euery quarter
they seeke forraine Gods, and
make them their owne: whilest
they set vp altars to vnknowne
Gods, and spirits, and doe en-
tertaine the sacred ceremo-
nies of all nations, they de-
serued their Empire. This
perpetuall course of religion
hath hitherto remained, not
broken with antiquitie but in-
creased. For age vseth to giue
to ceremonies and temples so
much more sanctity, as they
haue

haue augmentation of yeares. Neither yet, (for I dare here yeeld to make the search, and so erre with more authority) did our ancestors in searching entralls, ordaining rites, or dedicating temples, rashly spend their labour. View the memory of bookes, and you shall quickly finde, that they did initiate themselues into the rites of all religions, either to gratifie divine favour, to divert imminent anger of the Gods, or to asswage it being in full rage, and fury. Witnesse the *Idean* mother, which at her arrivall approu'd the chastity of a Matrone, and did free the citty from hostile feare. Witnesse the consecrate statues of *Castor*, and *Pollux*, as they shewed

22 *M. Minucius Felix*

shewed themselves in the lake, their horses all in a heate panting and foming, when they reported our victory over *Perfes*, the same day he was overcome. Witnesse the iteration of the great playes in the *Circus*, to reconcile the offence of *Iupiter*, according to the dreame of a vulgar Citizen. Witnes the ratified devotion of the *Decians*; and witnesse *Curtius*, who with leaping himselfe downe on horseback, into the swallow of a prodigious deepe gulfe, made it againe fill vp. And more often then wee would, our contempts of augurie, haue made manifest the presence of the Gods. Thence is the name of *Allia* dismall, thence did *Claudius*,

dius, and Iunius, in their sea-
 fight with the *Carthaginians*,
 suffer a cruell shipwrack. And
 to make the river *Thrasymene*
 run high and discoloured with
 our blood, *Flaminius* contem-
 ned the prediction of the
 birdes: and to make vs new
 worke for the recovering our
 Ensignes from the *Parthians*,
Crassus did scorne, and de-
 ferre the Priests holy impreca-
 tions. I omitte many antique
 memories, of the birthes, gifts,
 and munificence of the Gods,
 I neglect the Poets songs, I
 passe over many destinies fore-
 told by Oracles, least antiqui-
 tie may seeme vnto you over-
 fabulous. Behold the Temples,
 and statuary houses of the
 Gods, with which the Cittie
 of

24 *M. Minucius Felix*

of Rome is protected, and beautified: they are more glorious and rich in dressing and gifts, then venerable with their Deities, dwelling, abiding, and ever ready for present help in them. From thence Prophets full of God, and participating the divine nature, gather predictions of things to come, forewarne evils, giue cures for diseases, hope to the afflicted, solace in calamities, ease in labours: also in our sleep there, we see the Gods, we hear them, we acknowledge their presence: howsoever in the day we denie, violate their honours, and forswear by them. Therefore when in all nations there remaines a firme confession of the immortal Gods

and Gods, although their cause
glo- and originall be vncertaine, I
and can brooke no man, who pufte
their vp with I knowe not what
and bold irreligious wisedome,
elpedare attempt to dissolue and
Pro- elevate this religion of ours
tici- so old, so vsfull, so preserving
ga- humane societie. Away with
s to *Theodore of Cyrene*, and with
giue *Diagoras Melius* before him,
they upon whom antiquitie puts
ries the name of *Atheist*, both
leap which in their doctrine of no
wee Gods, tooke away all the re-
dgeverent feare and awfulnesse,
riny which mankind is gover-
ned. These men in their disci-
pline of impietie, although
nall they dissemble Philosophie,
rme shall neuer be reputed with
rtall ne. When the *Athenians* did
ods

B banish

26 *M. Minucius Felix*

banish out of their territories,
Protagoras of *Abdera*, who dis-
puted rather indiscreetly then
prophanely of Divinitie, & did
in their assembly burne his wri-
tings; (you will suffer me to
prosecute my vndertaken ac-
tion with a free zeale) must
not we mourne to behold men,
men I say of an incurable, ille-
gall, and desperate faction, so
to forrage vpon the Gods?
who with a collection of peo-
ple drawen from vtter base-
nesse, and with credulous woo-
men easily falling in the im-
becillitie of their sexe, insti-
tute a route and profane con-
spiracie, which in their no-
cturnall congregations, by so-
lemne fasts, and inhumane
feasts, things not of Sacrament as
but

es, but expiation doe league together, a lurking and light avoyding nation, full of prate in Corners, and dumbe in faire assemblies. They dispise our Temples as graues, they spit vpon the Gods, and deride our sacred Ceremonies. If a man may speake it, these miserable creatures with pittie behold the honours of our Priests, and halfe naked scorne our Purple. O their wonderfull and incredible bold foolerie. In feare of vncertaine future torments they dispise all present, and here they feare not to die, for feare of dying after death. So doth feare and false hope flatter them into a comfort of living againe. And now as euill things grow in greatest
B 2 abundance,

28 *M. Minucius Felix*

abundance, pernicious manners creeping in, these men haue gained every where in the worlde terrible assemblies of their impious combination, a combination accursed and to bee plucked vp by the very rootes. They know themselves by secret marks and tokens, they are in loue almost before they know one another, and promiscuous lust is with them a kind of religion, for they are all brothers and sisters, so that by intercession of so holy a name, common fornication must of necessity be with them incest. So doth this vaine mad superstition glory in being criminall. Neither would wise discerning common fame, (if there were no subsistencie of truth)

truth) report these horrid things of them , things not to be vttered without a preface of honour to the hearers . I heare that amongst all filthy beasts , from what perswasion I know not, they worship an Asses head, like worship like manners . Others report that they worship their Prelates and Priests privie members, adoring the nature of their spirituall Parents . Peradventure this suspition may bee false, yet it well agrees with a secret nocturnall solemnitie . But those which say their worship to bee a man put to death for criminall demerit, and that they worship the horrid similitudes of his crosse, these fit those wicked lost people with

30 *M Minucius Felix*

alters in a good congruitie,
making them adore that which
they deserue. Now of recei-
ving new commers into their
sect, the report is not so detest-
table as notorious. An Infant
is covered ouer in meale to
deceiue the Novice, and set
before him, then is he provo-
ked as it were with harmelesse
strokes to stab into the meale,
and so by concealed woundes
the Infant is kil'd. O horrid-
nesse! this Infants blood they
lick vp, and divide his mem-
bers amongst them; with this
sacrifice they are imbrued in-
to a league, and by the guilt of
murder giue pledge vnto mu-
tuall secrecie. If this be sacred,
what is sacrilegious? And the
manner of their feasting is
well

well knowne, all men every where report it, and it is famous in the Oration of our *Certenſian Fronto*, vpon a ſolemne day they come together to feaſt, with all their children, ſiſters, mothers, people of all ſexes, and all ages. There after much gluttonie, when the banquet is warme, and the fervencie of inceſtuous luſt is ſet on fire with wine, a dogge tied to the candleſtick, is by ſcraps caſt beyond the length of the line wherewith he is bound, provoked to leap impetuoſly forth, & then the diſcovering light being ouerturn'd and extinguished, each takes his fortune in the impudent darke- neſſe, wherewith to ſatiate their abhominable appetite.

32 *M Minucius Felix*

and so are they all if not in deed, yet in conscience alike incestuous, all desiring that which is by any acted. Advisedly I passe by many things, since what already is related is more then should bee, true in all, or the greatest part, as a man will easily belieue from the obscuritie of this impious religion. For why should they otherwise strue with all diligence, to hide and keepe secret that whatsoeuer it be which they worship. Sinnes reserve themselves, and things honest reioyce in the publique view of men. Why haue they no altars, no temples, no known images of their worship? Why dare they not speake openly, and make their Congregati-
ons

ons freely, except that which they worship and conceale so narrowly were either a matter of punishment or shame. Or from whence, who, or where is he, their onely solitarie and destitute Deitie, whom no free nation, no Empires, no *Roman* superstition euer heard of? The miserable tribes of the *Iewes*, they indeed, and they alone worship one God, but they doe it openly with temples, altars, sacrifices, ceremonies; whose vigour notwithstanding and power is so nothing, that the *Roman* Gods haue taken him captiue with all his nation. And what monsters, what prodigies doe the Christiāns faine? That God whom they can neither shew nor see, they

ingint B 5 make

34 *M. Minucius Felix*

make inquisitiue into all the manners of men, all the deeds, yea even into the very words and secret thoughts of all, posting every where, and every where present. They will haue him troublesome, vnquiet and impudently curious, standing by at all actes, inter-errant in all places, when no sufficiency straind with a vniuersall care can intend the service of every particular, nor distracted with particulars can suffice for an vniuersall preferuation. Why, and to the whole earth, even to the Heavens also and the Starres they threaten a combustion, and prepare a ruine, as if the eternall order of nature appointed by Divine lawes might

might ever bee troubled, or
the league of all the Elements
broken, and the heavenly
frame divided, all this all in
whose continent and embra-
cing circle wee haue our be-
ing, should bee subverted.
Nor contented with this fu-
rious opinion they hang and
knit vnto it other olde wiues
fables; how they shall bee
borne anew after death, when
they are ashes and cinders;
and I know not with what
beliefe they assure them-
selues in their lyes; to heare
all, you would thinke they
were already in a resurrecti-
on. A pernicious evill fanſie,
and a double madneſſe! they
denounce vtter confuſion to
the Heavens and Starres,
which

36 *M. Minucius Felix*

which wee leaue as we finde,
and to themſelues dead and
extinct, for as wee are borne
wee dye, they againe pro-
miſe eternity. And for this
reaſon they hold funerall
fires in ſepulture a damnable
execration; as if our bodies
although ſaved from flames,
ſhould not with yeares and
ages bee diſſolued into earth;
as if it were a thing materiall,
whether the beaſts of the For-
reſts did teare, or the fiſhes
of the ſea conſume, or the
earth cover, or the fire ſub-
due our dead carcaſſes; when
any ſepulture, if we did feele,
were ſtill a puniſhment, and
if wee feele nothing, then
muſt a flaming buriall bee in
her celerity the beſt cure of
rottenneſſe.

rottenesse. So deceiued with
this error, to themselues
good men when they are
dead they promise perpetu-
ity of life, and to others as im-
pious, sempiternall torments.
Much here might bee added;
but I will hasten my discourse,
having already sufficiently
declared that even they
themselves are the most vn-
righteous people. Nay if wee
should also grant them the
title of righteousness, you or
the greatest part of you agree
in sentence, that innocencie
of life or guiltinesse ought to
bee imposed vpon a kinde of
destiny. For whatsoeuer wee
doe, as some addict the cause
to destiny, you lay it vpon
God, and vse to say, that your
fect.

38 *M. Minucius Felix*

fect receiues not voluntarie
but the elect? Wherefore
you must needs haue an vn-
iust Iudge, which doth punish
in men not their will, but
fortune. Yet I would faine
learne of you, whether we
must come to this your resur-
rection without our bodye
or with our bodyes, and with
what bodyes, the same, or
with some innovation of
them? If without the bodyes,
for all that I know, out of a
bodye, there is neither minde,
nor soule, nor life: if with the
bodye, is not that already
moultured away? With ano-
ther bodye? Then is there a
new man borne, and the for-
mer not repaired: and yet in
the fluxe and course of so ma-
ny

ny hundred yeares and ages,
what one with the earnest
fortune of *Protesilaus* hath re-
turned from any infernall
treasuries of death, with per-
mission of some few houres
new lively-hood, that wee
might belieue resurrection by
example. All these figments
of braine-sicke opinion, and
these foolish comforts, spor-
ted out by deceitfull Poets in
a sweetnesse of verse, you in
an over-credulity haue taken
vp a new, and skervily impo-
sed them vpon your owne
God. Neither will you learne
experience from your owne
present sufferings: In them
you might see with what
vaine hope these promises
feed their believers, and you
might

40 *M. Minucius Felix*

might deeme by the misery of
your life what were more
probable after death. Be-
hold the greatest part of you
and the better as you say are
cold and hungry, you haue no
wealth, you pine with want
and famine; and doth God
suffer this, doth hee dissem-
ble, or will hee not, or can
hee not helpe his good peo-
ple? Hee is then disable, or
vniust. Thou which doest
dreame of an immortality af-
ter thou art layed in the graue,
when with danger thou art
shaken into a cold feare,
when thou doest burne in a
feaver, when thou art tormen-
ted with paine, doest thou
not then feele thine owne
condition, doest thou not ac-
knowledge

knowledge thy fragility? Alas
poore miserable man, infirmi-
ty thus convincing thee a-
gainst thy will, yet no con-
fession! But these are com-
mon miseries. See terrours
vpon you, executions, tor-
tures, and now you must vn-
dergoe the Crosse, not wor-
ship it, you must also bee
burnt vp in fire, which you
foretell and feare. Where is
the God, who will helpe you
to liue againe, can hee not
saue you aliue? Doe not the
Romanes without your God
sway their Empire, command
and enioy the whole world,
and domineete over you? You
in the meane while pensue
and sorrowfull, abstaine from
honest pleasures, you come not
to

42 *M. Minucius Felix*

to any spectacles, are not present at our pompes and triumphes, our publique feasts are without your company, our meates and drinckes offered at the Altars you abhorre, and all our sacred sportes, and so seeme to feare those Gods you deny. You weaue no wreathes of flowres for your heads, you honour not your body with sweete perfumes, but reserue their vnction for funeralls, which nevertheless you refuse to adorne with garlands; pale chivie people, and deseruing pittie, but the pittie of our Gods. Miserable men, you doe not yet rise againe to life, and in the meane while you liue not. Wherefore if you haue in you any wise-

chivie

wisdome or shame, leaue of
searching the regions of Hea-
uens with their fatalities and
secrets. Tis enough for you
to looke before your feete, e-
specially being vnlearned, vn-
polisht, rude and rusticke.
They to whome is not given
power of vnderstanding civill
things, must of necessity bee
farther disable for disquirie of
things Divine. Also if any of
you lust after Philosophy, the
best of you may if he can, i-
mitate *Socrates* the very
Prince of wisdom, whose
knowne answere it is when
hee was at any time deman-
ded of celestiall matters, that
which is aboue vs is to vs no-
thing, and therefore worthily
did hee from the Oracle re-
ceiue

44 *M. Minucius Felix*

ceiue the testimony of singular wisdom, which he before apprehended of himselfe, that hee was therefore preferred before all others, not because hee had comprehended all things, but because hee had learned that hee knew nothing. So is chiefe wisdom the confession of our own vnskillfullnesse. And from this fountaine did flow the secure ambiguity of *Arcefilas*, *Carneades* much after him, and of the greatest sort of the *Academicks* in questions of high nature, and in this kind the vnlearned may safely, and the learned gloriously play the Philosophers. The slownesse also of the *Melian Simonides* is it not admirable and worthy

ing any to bee followed? Who
 efore when hee was asked by the
 , that Tirant *Hieron* of what essence
 erre and quality hee supposed the
 cause Gods to bee, required first a
 all day of deliberation, the next
 e had ay following gotte a proroga-
 tion of two dayes more, and a-
 lome aine a like addition to that,
 wne and then when at last the Ti-
 from ant enquired the causes of so
 e se- great delay, made answeare,
silas, the more time hee spent in the
 , and inquisition, the more obscure
Aca- did this truth appeare vnto
 high him. And in my opinion things
 the doubtfull are to bee left as we
 the finde them; neither in a deli-
 the operation of so many, and so
 esse great persons, may wee
ides without empeachment of te-
 vor- merity and boldnesse bring
 thy in

46 *M. Minucius Felix*

in our iudgement on either me
side, for feare least we either it,
destroy all religion, or induce onl
for worship old wiues super- wh
stitutions. Thus spake *Cecilius*, dis
& then smiling, (for the fluxe by
of a long oration had allayed the
the tumour of his disdaine) to ver
these things said hee, what re- see
ply dares *Octavius*, a man of tion
Plautus like progenie, of hap
kers the first, and the last of hea
Philosophers? I sayd, forbear del
to sport on him, for you doe from
not worthily to triumph in thi
concinnity of speech, before ami
hee hath fully ended his de- not
claration on the other side, e- from
specially when your enquiry tha
aymes not at praise but truth. wh
And although your oration fals
hath wonderfully delighted pea
me

er me with the subtile variety of
er it, yet I consider deeply not
ce only for this action, but for the
r-whole kinde and manner of
disputation, that many times,
ke by the ability and power of
ed the disputants eloquence, e-
to ven things of cleare truth
e-seeme to change their condi-
of tion. This is well knowne to
a-happen by the easinesse of the
of hearers, who seduced with a
re delicacy of words are taken off
e from an intention of the
n things, assenting without ex-
e-amination to all that is spoken;
not discerning false things
from right, and vnwitting,
y that truth may bee in that
i. which seemes incredible, and
n falsehood in the greatest ap-
d pearance of truth. Therefore
e the

48. *M. Minucius Felix*

the more often they belieue earnest assertions, more frequently are they againe convinced by skilfull men, and dayly beguild through their owne rashnesse, transferre the fault of iudgement into a complaint of vncertainty, and at last condemning all things, had rather suspect any thing, then put themselves to the difficulty of iudging, whether things bee false or no. Wherefore wee must haue a provident care least with such wee runne into a hatred of all enquiries, and at last breake forth as doe many of the more simple sort, into an execration and hate of men also. For these vnheedfull credulous people when they are circumvented
by

by those whom they esteemed good men, for feare of a like error now suspecting all things, distrust those as wicked also, whom otherwise they could approue for persons of excellent goodnesse. Since then in every matter there be who dispute on both sides, and truth is most often obscure on the best, on the other lurkes wonderfull subtilty, which often with a copiousnesse of eloquence doth imitate the certainty of plaine evidence, it behooues vs to ponder all with diligence, so as we may giue subtile argumentation her due praise, yet make choice of those things which are right, them onely approue and entertaine. You depart
C faith

50 *M. Minucius Felix*

saith *Cecilius*, from the office
of a faire iudge. For it is very
iniurious for you to infringe
the force of my action with
interposing so graue a disputa-
tion, when *Octavius* is yet en-
tire and vnblemisht in what
hee shall reply. If that, say I,
which you haue in your decla-
mation made so foule can bee
refuted, then is this remem-
brance of mine brought in
briefly for the common good
of vs all, that wee may deliuer
our iudgement from an exact
examination, not swayed with
blastes of eloquence, but with
the solidity of the things
themselues. Neither will I a-
ny longer stay our intention
as you complaine, since if you
please to giue a faire silence,
you

his Octavius. M 51

you may soone heare the answer of our *Iannarius*, who seemes with ioye to prepare himselfe. And then *Octavius*: I will, saith he, speake according to my ability, and vse all my strength, yet must you endeavour with me to wash of with a flood of true wordes his most bitter asperision of contumelious reproches. And without dissimulation first of all I must say, that my *Natalis* hath not deliuered his opinion with constancy, it hath erred, it hath flowen out, bin ready many times to slippe from it selfe. For hee varies sometimes in a beliefe of the Gods, sometimes in a deliberation, peradventure to the end that by the vncertainty

C 2 of

52 *M. Minucius Felix*

of his proposition, the intention of our reply might with the lesse certainty come home vnto him. But I will haue no craft in my *Natalis*, I doe not belieue it, cunning trade wit is farre from his simplicity. How then? As he that knowes not the right way, when hee comes where the way parts into diuers turnings, he stands doubtfull, dares not chuse any, nor approue all; so hee who hath no stable iudgement of truth, dissipates and scatters his doubtfull minde with infidelity of suspicions. No miracle therefore if *Cecilius* bee also tossed, tided, and waved vp and downe, in so many repugnant contrarieties. From which to set him safe I will convince

convince and reprove all his
diversenesse with a discourse
that shall accept no prooffe or
confirmation but from truth
only, hee shall no more doubt,
no more wander. And because
my brother broke forth to say,
how ill hee tooke it, how hee
did stomack, disdain and
grieue, that illiterate poore ig-
naroes should dispute of ce-
lestiall things, let him know
that all men of what age soe-
uer, sexe or dignity, are begot-
ten capable, and able of reason
and sense, and haue not by for-
tune, but nature an endow-
ment of wisdom: and that
Philosophers themselves or
whosoever by invention of
arts have attained famous me-
mory, before by the solerti-
ousnesse

54 *M. Minucius Felix*

ousnesse of their minde they
got this glory, were in appea-
rance illiterate, halfe-naked
Plebeians; that wealthy men
even staked vnto their riches,
doe rather consider gold then
Heaven: and that these our
poore men haue found out
wisdome, & deliuered all dis-
cipline to posterity. Whence
it appeareth, that wit is not
an escheat of wealth, not
compassed by study, but
proceeding from the very
information of the minde.
Nor are we therefore to chafe
or greiue, if any man whosoe-
ver he be, doe search after di-
vine things, conceiue, and o-
pen his sentence: when not
the authority of him that ar-
gues, but still the truth of the
disputation

disputation is to be required:
and by how much the speech
is the more vnskilfull, so much
more illustrious is the reason,
not varnisht with a pompe and
grace of eloquence, but sustai-
ned as it ought to be, by the
rule of right. Neither doe I
refuse that which *Cecilius* la-
bours to obtaine, that a man
ought to know himselfe, and
roundly consider, what he is,
whence he is, why he is, whe-
ther concrete of elements,
compact of attomes, or rather
made, fashioned and animated
by God; which we cannot try
and make evident without an
inquisition of the whole vni-
verse; when things here are so
coherent, knit and chained to-
gether, as if you doe not dili-

56 *M Minucius Felix*

gently examine the reasons of
of divinity, we cannot kindly
learne the condition of hu-
mane nature, neither may a
man fairely handle civill af-
fares, except hee know the
common city of the world in
which all haue fellowship: e-
specially, because from wilde
and tame beastes we only dif-
fer in this, that they groveling
and turning to the earth, are
borne to looke after nothing
but their food; wee to whom
an erect countenance, and an
aspect for the view of hea-
ven is given, besides speech
and reason, by which wee ac-
knowledge God, we feele &
resemble him, must not here
haue leaue of ignorance? when
also a celestially brightnesse is
every

every where obvious to our eyes and senses, and it seemes to me a crime no lesse then the greatest sacrilege, to seeke on earth that which wee ought to finde in heaven. What minde, sense, eyes can we suppose in them, who will haue the beauty of this world not perfected by divine providence, but transformed into a globe by an infinity of peeces casually tumbling together. For what can bee so open, so credible, so cleare, when thou liftest thy eyes to heaven, and dost consider the glories of that high circumference, as that there must needs be some Deity of most excellent spirit, by which all nature hath her inspiration,
C. 5 motion,

58 *M. Minucius Felix*

motion, nutrition, and government? See heaven it selfe, how farre it is extended, how swiftly tis rowled about, see the night diaperd with starres, see the day made illustrious with the Sunne. Is not here a miraculous divine libration of the great Master? Looke vpon the yeare how it is made by the Sunnes circling progresse, looke on the Moone how it wheelles about the month in an encrease, waine, and last quarter: what shall wee say to the interchanging vicissitude of darknesse and light, to make vs an eternall reparation of worke and rest? And to Astrologers we must leaue a more ample contemplation of the starres, how they

they governe the course of navigation, or direct the seasons of plowing and harvest. All which things doe not only require a perfect wifdome and great artificer, for their creation, being, order, but also a mighty power of wit and industry, to conceiue, dilcouer, and vnderstand them. The order of times distinguished with a constant variety of fruites, doth not this testify the authour and parent of it? The spring with his flowers, the summer with his harvest, the welcome maturity of autumnne, and the oliue shaking winter are all of equall necessity. Which order would easily bee confounded, if it did not consist in greate wifdome.

And

60 *M. Minucius Felix*

And it is also great providence, that winter alone doth not burne with her frost, or summer alone doth not scorch with heate, to insert a middle temperament of autumn and spring; that the changes of the yeare returning in her owne trace, may slide about in a secret inoffensive revolution. Goe to the sea, the law of the shoare bounds it. View all the trees that be, they haue their vegetation from the bowells of the earth, behold the Ocean, there is reciprocall estuation of her floods, see the fountaines, they spring from ever lasting veines, looke vnto the rivers, they glide along their wonted bankes. What shall I say of the steepe mountaines,

taines, the windeing hills, and
the broad fields, how aptly
they are disposed. What shall
I tell you the divers sorts of
defence which creatures have
one against another? some ar-
med with hornes, other with
teeth, vnderlayd with hoofes,
and ear'd with sharpe bristles:
or free in the swiftnesse of
feete, and flight of wings. But
most of all doth the beauty of
our shape shew God to bee
the artificer, a straight stan-
ding, an erect countenance,
eyes placed aboue, as in a
watch towre, and all the o-
ther senses ranged as it were
for the garde of a castle. Tis
long to goe through every
part: there is no one member
of a man which is not as well
for

62 *M. Minucius Felix*

for cause of fairenesse, as necessity. And that which is more wonderfull, though we haue all the same figure, yet is there in singular persons such a deflexion of the lineaments, that wee appeare all alike, and all disalike compared one with another. The condition of our birth, the desire of procreation, is not this from the will of God, Who makes brests in the maturation of the infant to fill with milke, with whose plenty the tender youngling may bee fosterd vp? Neither doth God only take care for the whole world, but also for every part. *Britany* something defectiue in the Sunne, is refresh't with the warmth of the sea, flowing round

round about it. *Nilus* tempers the drought of *Egypt*, *Euphrates* husbands *Mesopotamia*, *Indus* is reported to sow & water the *East*. If you come into a house, and see the excellent culture, order, and ornaments of it; you cannot but thinke some Master rules there much better then all the furniture. So in this house of the world, when you see the heavens and the earth, their providence, order, and law; believe there is a Lord of this vniuerse, and a Father more excellent then the Starres, and all the parts of it. Except peradventure, because there is no question of providence, you will thinke it a matter of enquiry, whether the celestiall kingdome

64 *M. Minucius Felix*

dome be governed by the Empire of one, or the will and pleasure of many; which thing tis not much labour to open vnto a man, who will conceiue the nature of Empires on earth, which likely haue their example from heaven. When did society of Empire here either beginne with faith, or end without blood? I omit the *Persians* inaugurating principality by the neighing of horses, and I passe over the almost forgotten fable of the *Theban* brothers. The story and contention of *Romulus* and *Remus* for a kingdome of sheepeheards, and a cottage, is well knowne. The warres of the Father and Sonne in law, are spoken of through the whole

whole world, and the fortune
of so great an Empire, could
not satisfie these two. See the
rest. There is one King of the
Bees, one leader among the
flockes, one chiefe in the
heardes: and can you thinke
the great principality of hea-
ven to bee divided, and the
whole power of the true di-
vine Empire, to be cut in sun-
der? when tis apparant that
God the parent of all things
hath neither beginning nor
ending: which giues natiuity
to all, perpetuity to himselfe:
which was before the world
a world of contemplation to
himselfe, who by his word
commandes a being to all
things that are, by an infinite
reason, and vertue disposes
and

66 M. Minucius Felix

and perfects the vniuerse. He cannot bee seene, for our eyes cannot endure his brightnesse; he cannot bee comprehended, hee is too pure for our feeling; hee cannot bee brought into estimation, hee is greater then our senses; infinite, immense, and only to himselfe so great, as he only knowes. Our breast is too narrow to vnderstand him: and therefore wee can only deeme worthily of him when we say hee is inestimable. I will speake what I thinke. Who weenes to know the greatnesse of God, doth diminish it, he that will not diminish it, must confesse himselfe ignorant of it. Neither aske you the name of God, God is the name.

There

He There words of appellation
are vſefull, where a multitude
is to bee ſeverally knowne
one from another, by their
proper *Heraldrie*. To God
who is alone, the whole title
is God : whome if I ſhall call
Father, you may thinke him
earthly : if King, you may ſuſ-
pect him carnall : if Lord, you
may alſo apprehend him mor-
tall. Take away theſe acci-
dents of names, and you ſhall
better ſee his glory. All mens
conſent is of him. I heare the
people when they liſt vp their
hands to Heaven, ſay nothing
but, God : and God is great,
and God is true, and if God
permit; is this the ſpeech of an
ordinary *Plebeian*, or the pray-
er of a *Chriſtian* confeſſing his
believe?

68 M. Minucius Felix

beliete? And they who will art
 haue *Iupiter* Prince of heaven kye
 they are deceiued in the name bea
 but they agree vpon the vnitynd
 of power. Also I heare the hir
 Poets preaching one Father bee
 of Gods and men: and making pi
 the mindes of all mortall men ple
 such only, as it pleaseth God of
 the Father of all things to in-alt
 fuse. Whence the *Mantuan* co
Maro plainly, neerely and do
 truely, where hee saith, --- tic
 First Heaven and earth and e- th
 very part beside---Are with w
 an inward spirit fed---and an fi
 infused minde---doth stirre o
 them vp, with every kinde of t
 creatures. The same in another o
 place doth call this minde and v
 spirit God. --- For the God-
 head is --- diffused through
 earth

will earth through seas and lofty
avenues, --- From hence all
name beasts and men, all showres
vnited fires. And what other
e the thing doe wee preach God to
ather bee, but a minde, a reason, a
aking spirit? Let vs rehearse if you
men please the learning of the Phi-
Gods philosophers. You shall find them
o in-although in a diuerse way,
tuan conspiring to deliuer the same
and doctrine. I omit those of an-
--- tique ruder times, who for
de- their sayings were reputed
with wise men. Let *Thales Mile-*
dan *sus* bee the first who disputed
irre of things celestiall. Hee said
e of that water was the beginning
her of things, and God that minde
and which formed all things out
od- of water, a minde too high and
ugh sublime for humane appre-
rth hen- sion,

70 *M. Minucius Felix*

prehension, proceeding from God. See the principall Philosophers opinion altogether consonant with ours. *Anaximenes* afterwards, and then the *Apollonian Diogenes* make the aire God, infinite and without measure, here is also their consent of divinity. In *Anaxagoras* his description, a kind of infinite minde is called God. To *Pythagoras* God is a spirit passing and intentiue through the whole nature of things, from which the life of all creatures is taken. *Xenophanes* will haue God to be a minde, and all besides that is infinite. *Antisthenes* hath many popular Gods, but for a naturall chiefe God he knowes one only. *Spensippus* will haue
God

God to be a naturall, animating vigor, by which all things are governed. And *Democritus* although he be the first inventor of atomes, yet v-
sually he calls God, that nature and intelligence which doth powre forth so many images of it selfe. *Straton* also deifies nature. And that *Epicurus* who faines the Gods either idle or none, yet giues he a supremacy to nature. *Aristotle* is various, yet he designs one power; sometimes he sayes the minde is God, on while the world, and againe he makes God ouerseer of the world. Also the *Pontick Heraclides* ascribes vnto God a diuine minde though di-
versly. *Theophrastus*, *Zenon*,
Chrisippus,

72 *M. Minucius Felix*

Crysippus and *Cleanthes*, they be also divers, yet they all agree vpon a vnity of prouidence. In *Cleanthes* disputation, sometimes the minde, sometimes the spirit, sometimes the ethereall part is God. *Zenon* his master will haue a naturall diuine lawe, or that ethereall part, and sometimes reason, to be the beginning of all things. The same man interpreting *Iuno* to be the aire, *Iupiter* the heauens, *Neptune* the sea, *Vulcan* the fire, & likewise shewing the other Gods of the people, to bee the Elements, doth shrewdly convince & reprove the publique error. *Chrysippus* almost after the same manner belieues a diuine virtue, a rati-
tionall

tional nature, the world sometimes, and sometimes a fatall necessity, to be God: and hee followes *Zenon*, in a naturall interpretation vpon the Poems of *Hesiod*, *Homer*, and *Orpheus*. The *Babylonian Diogenes* also hath a way of expounding and shewing that the birth of *Iupiter*, the rising of *Minerva*, import things and not Deities. For the *Socrati-call Xenophon* denies that the forme of the true God can be seene, and therefore ought not to be sought after. *Aristo* of *Chios* sayes, he cannot be comprehended. Both these conceiued a diuine Maiesty by their dispaire of vnderstanding it. *Platoes* discourse of God is more cleare, both for

D things

74 *M. Minucius Felix*

things and names, and it were made
indeed all heavenly, but that him
hee doth sometimes debase it
with mixture of a civill politi-
ticke perswasion. Wherefore God
in his dialogue of *Timaeus*, God nam
is to him vnder that name the dee-
parent of the world, the ma- to l
ker of the soule, the builder the
of all things both in Heaven the
and in earth; and he tels vs in if t
his preface, that it is hard to pro
finde him, by reason of his in- the
finite incredible power, and ant
when hee is found, no lesse del
impossible to make a publique ow
declaration of him. These are vs
almost the same things with err
ours. For we acknowledge a me
God, call him the parent of all ph
things, and except wee bee bot
demanded, wee vse not to of
make

ere make any vulgar speech of
nathim. I haue opened the opini-
ions of the most famous Philo-
sophers, all agreeing for one
God, although vnder diuers
names: so as many would
deeme, either the Christians
to bee now Philosophers, or
the Philosophers to haue been
then Christians. Wherefore
if the world bee so ruled by
providence, and governed by
the pleasure of one God, the
antiquity of ignorant people
delighted and taken with their
owne fables, ought not draw
vs to a publique consent of
the error, refuted by the iudge-
ment of their owne Philoso-
phers, who haue on their side
both reason and the authority
of more auncient times. For

76 *M. Minucius Felix*

our Ancestors did so easily
giue credence vnto lyes, as
they did without examinati-
on take vp into their beliefe
many other prodigious mira-
cles, the diuers shap'd mon-
sters of *Scilla* and *Chimera*, a
Hidra happy to renew his
heads by cutting off, *Centau-
res*, that is, Horses bearing vp-
ward the shapes of men: and
whatsoever fame pleased to
fanie, they delighted to
heare. What shall I speake of
those Grandame tales, men
turned into birds, wilde beasts
into men, men into trees and
flowers? which things if they
were done, those things were
done which are impossible
and therefore were they ne-
uer acted. And in like man-
ner

ner our Ancestors with an im-
prouident credulity, and rude
simplicity did take Gods into
their beliefe, whilest religi-
ously they worship their
Kings, when after their death
they desire to see them in i-
mage, when they reioice to
detaine their memories in sta-
tue, these solaces did in time
grow to a holy solemnity. And
every where before the world
was open to commerce, when
nations had not yet mingled
their customes, every pro-
vince, did worship their
founder, or renowned Cap-
taine, or chaste Queene va-
liant aboue her sexe, or any o-
thers, who had found out be-
nefit, or art, as citizens wor-
thy of remembrance. So the

78 M. Minucius Felix

dead had a reward and the living an example. Read the writings of Historians, you will then confesse with me Gods created for merit of virtue or invention. *Euhemerus* pursues and numbers their birthes countries and sepulchers, and hee shewes all of them through severall provinces, 'the *Dictean Iupiter*, *Apollo of Delphos*, the *Pharian Isis*, and *Eleusinian Ceres*: hee tels how they were assum'd into a reputation of Deity, who wandring through the earth did finde out new fruits for the better maintaining the life and liuely-hood of men. *Persens* plaies the Philosopher to the same purpose, rehearses the fruits which
were

were found and by whom
 vnder the same names;
 whence the Comedian sporte-
 fully saies, that *Venus* with-
 out *Bacchus* and *Ceres* will
 take colde. *Alexander* the
 great *Macedonian* writes in a
 famous letter to his Mother,
 that a Priest did for feare be-
 tray vnto him the secret of
 the Gods being men only:
 hee makes *Vulcan* the chiefe
 of them all, and after him the
 race of *Iupiter*. Looke well
 vpon the history of *Isis*, her
 transmutation into a swallow,
 her rattle, the scattered mem-
 bers of thy *Serapis* or *Osiris*,
 and his empty tombe, obserue
 those sacred rites and mi-
 sterries, you shall finde tragicall
 endings, deaths and funeralls,
 D 4 mourning,

80 *M. Minucius Felix*

mourning and lamentation of miserable Gods. *Isis* with her dogge-headed *Anubis*, and her bald Priests, doth with mournfull lamentation make enquiry for her lost Sonne, and her wretched Priests beat their breasts and imitate the griefe of the vnhappy Mother. By and by they seeme to finde the litle infant, the Priests leap for ioy, her dogge-headed retrieuer glories in his invention: neither doe they omit every yeare, eyther to loose that which they finde, or finde that which they loose. Is it not ridiculous to mourne that which you worship or to worship that for which you haue cause of mourning? Nevertheless such aunciently were

were the sacred ceremonies of the *Egyptians*, and the *Romans* now vse them. *Ceres* with burning torches, and girt about with Serpents, in much anxiety and sorrow hunts after her daughter deflower'd and ravished as she was wandering in the fields. These are the *Eleusinian* rites. And what bee *Jupiters*? A goate is the nurse, and the infant is stolne away from his greedy Father, least hee devoure him, and the *Coribant* Priests make a great tinkling with bells, that the Father may not heare the squealing of the litle childe. I am ashamed to speake of the *Dindimene Cybele*, who being difformed and very old, as the Mother of many Gods, be-

D 5 cause

82 *M. Minucius Felix*

cause she could not entice the
 unhappily beautifull *Atis* vn-
 to adultery, did cut out his
 stones, and make him an *Eunuch* God. For memory of this
 fable the *Galli* her capon
 Priests vnman themselves and
 worship her with the tor-
 ment of their body. Why,
 this is not sanctimony but tor-
 ture. And what are the formes
 and habits of your Gods, is
 there not ridiculous scorne
 and disgrace in them? *Vulcan*
 is a lame maimd God. *Apollo*
 through so many ages is still
 a smooth chind God. *Escula-
 pius* hath beard inough, al-
 though he be the Sonne of the
 ever youthfull *Apollo*. Tis the
 blu-ey'd *Neptune*, the gray-ey-
 ed *Minerva*, & the goodly cow
 eyes

eyes of *Inno*. *Mercury* hath wings on his feete, *Pan* hoofes and *Saturne* fetters, *Ianus* hath two faces as if hee went contrary waies. The huntresse *Diana* is high girt, and armed with jauelins, *Diana* at *Ephesus* hath many brealts, and *Diana* of the high waies hath three heads, and makes a horrible shew with a multitude of hands. And for your *Jupiter*, sometimes his statue is beardedlesse, sometimes he is set vp with a huge beard: when hee is called *Hammon*, then hee weares hornes, when *Capitolinus*, his right arme beares a thunderbolt, when *Latiall*, hee is all embrued in blood, and when *Feretrius*, come not neare him. And not to dwell.

84 *M. Minucius Felix*

dwell longer vpon these many sorts of *Iupiters*, there bee so many monsters of him, as names. *Erigone* is hung vp in a halter, to make the burning constellation of the Virgin amongst the Starres. *Castor* and *Pollux* haue made a bargain to liue and dye by turns every second day. *Esculapius* that he may rise vnto divinity, is struck with thunder. *Hercules* that hee may put off his mortality, is burnt into ashes vpon mount *Oeta*. These fables and errours wee learne of our vndiscerning parents, (and which is more grievous) they are our laborious study and discipline in the songs of the Poets; and it is a great wonder to see how much they haue

his Octavius. 85

haue blemisht truth with their
authority. Wherefore *Plato* in
his institution of a common-
wealth hath even banisht
Homer that renowned prai-
sed and ever laureal Poet,
from the number of his citi-
zens. For this chiefe of Poets,
in his *Troian* warre, makes a
mocke of the Gods, and brings
them every where into the
actions and affaires of men.
Hee sets them together by the
eares, wounds *Venus*, bindes
Mars, hurts and drives him
out of the battaile. Hee tels
how *Iupiter* is reskued by
Briareus, when the other
Gods conspired to binde him,
and how hee wept showres
of blood, because hee could
not deliuer his Sonne *Sarpe-
don*

86 *M. Minucius Felix*

don from death : and makes him bed his wife *Iuno*, through the helpe of *Venus* girdle, more luxuriously, then ever he had laine with any of his wenches. Otherwhere *Hercules* hath the employment to ridde a stable of dung, and *Apollo* is heardsman to *Admetus*; *Neptune* builds the wals of *Troy* for *Laomedon*, and vnhappy workeman hee cannot get his hire. There *Vulcan* vpon his anvile beates out thunder for *Iupiter* and armour for *Aeneas*: when heaven and thunder and lightning were long before ever *Iupiter* was borne in *Creete*; such as that one-eyed *Vulcan* could never imitate, and *Iupiter* himselve must ever feare. What shall

I speake of *Mars* and *Venus*
taken in adultery and the rape
of *Jupiter* vpon *Ganimede*
consecrated in heaven. All
which things seeme to bee
produced, that men may haue
authority for their vices. With
such like inventions and swee-
ter lyes the dispositions of
youth are corrupted, on these
fables they stay, and grow vp
to a perfect age, and in these
opinions they miserably dye;
when truth is more easily
found, but of those who seeke
it. For all the writers of aun-
cient times both Greeke and
Latin haue deliuered that this
Saturne Prince of all the fa-
bulous genealogie was a man.
Nepos and *Cassius* in their hi-
story know this, and *Thallus*
and

88 *M. Minucius Felix*

and *Diodorus* speake it. Hee
for feare of his Sonnes rage
fled from *Crete*, and came
into *Italy*, and being hospital-
ly entertained by *Ianus*,
taught many things to those
ignorant country people, as
being a pretty polisht *Greeke*,
to write by Alphabet, to
coyne mony, to make many
sorts of instruments. And be-
cause he had here safely lurkt,
hee pleased to call this hiding
place *Latium*. He gaue them
a city called *Saturnia*, by his
owne name, and *Ianus* left
them his *Ianiculum*, for
which they are both re-
membred with posterity.
Therefore, when he so fled
and lurkt out of the way, sure-
ly he was both the father of a
man

man and a mans sonne: and amongst the *Italians* cald a sonne of heauen and of earth, because he was to them of vnknowne parents; as at this day when we see people suddenly come, and we know not from whence, we say they come from heauen, or obscure ignoble commers we doe terme sonnes of the earth. This *Saturnes* sonne hauing drouen his father out of *Crete*, raigned there, died there, and had children there: *Iupiters* caue is there yet to be seene, and they shew his sepulcher, and many of their holy rites convince his mortality. Tis idle to goe through all the singularity and rablement of these Deities in a like narration; when

90 *M. Minucius Felix*

when mortality proovd vpon their first parents must of necessity fall on the rest by order of succession, except perchance you will faine them to be Gods after their death, as *Romulus* is a God by the perjurie of *Proculus*, and tis the kind pleasure of the *Moors* to haue *Inba* be a God: and other Kings are Gods, which are consecrated into Deitie, not because the people believed so, but to dismiss them with honour from their office of kings craft. And many times these are made Gods against their will, they would rather stay in a mortality, they are afraid to be made Gods, and although they be never so old they would never willingly bee

ix
yp- be such Gods, therefore of those
of that die none be Gods, be-
or- cause God cannot dye, and no
er- Gods are borne, because eve-
to- ry thing must die that is borne,
as and that only is divine, which
er- hath neither birth nor death,
he And if there were gods borne,
to why are not some borne in
er our dayes, except *Jupiter* be
re now waxed old, and *Iuno*
ot hath left off teeming. And can
ed *Minerva* grow gray headed
th before she hath had children?
of Or is all this generation of
es Gods passed and gone, because
st people no longer assent vnto
er their fables? But if Gods
e could be borne and not die,
d we should haue more Gods
d then men, the heauens would
y not now bee large enough
c to

92 *M. Minucius Felix*

to containe them, the ayre
could not receiue, nor the
earth beare their multitudes.
Whence it is manifest, that
they were men, whose births
we read, and whose deaths
we know. When therefore
the common people doe pray
vnto their consecrate images,
and worshippe them, who
doubts but that ignorant opini-
on is here deceiud with the
beauty of the worke, dazeld
with the bright glittering
lustre of gold and siluer, and
besotted on the faire whitenes
of the Iron; But if a man con-
ceiue in his minde with what
torments and engines euerie
image is formd, he will shame
to feare that matter, which is
so misusd by the artificer, before
he

he can make it a God. For the
wodden God, a peice per-
chance of some vnhappy poste
or fireblocke, is hung vp, cut,
squard, and hewed; the brazen
or siluer God, (as it was often
done by the *Egyptian* king)
is made out of some vncleane
vessell, knockt with hammers,
brought into figure vpon the
anvill: and the God of stone, is
againe hewed, scrapd and
made smooth by some impure
vicious man. These feele not
the iniury of their natiuity,
nor the honour of your wor-
shippe. Or perchance this
stone, this wood, this siluer,
is not yet a God. When then
shall they be? They are now
cemented, set together, set
vp; is there yet no God? They
haue

94 *M. Minucius Felix*

haue their ornament, their consecration, they are praied too. So at last a God is made when any man pleases to giue these statues a dedication. Dumbe creatures, how much more truely doe they by nature esteeme of your Gods? Mice, Swallowes, Kites, they know these Gods haue no feeling, they nibble them, get on top, & set on them: & if you driue them not away, they make nests in the very mouth of your God. Spiders weaue cobwebbes about their face, they hang this worke on their heades: you wipe, cleanse, and rubbe all of. And these Gods which you make, you protect and feare; whilest none of you will consider that you ought

ought to know God before
 you worship him, whilest
 men reioyce to obey their pa-
 rents vnreasonably, whilest
 they had rather follow a com-
 mon errour then belieue
 themselues, whilest they
 know nothing of that they
 feare. So hath covetousnesse
 a consecration in gold and sil-
 ver, so come idle statues to
 finde their forme with you,
 so growes the *Romane* super-
 stition, whose rights if you
 runne through, how many
 things are there of laughter,
 and more of pittie? In the cold
 shriveling winter some course
 vp and downe naked, some
 goe capt after a strange man-
 ner, carrying about on
 their shoulders targets, on
 some

96 *M. Minucius Felix*

some slash their skins, and
from streete to streete leade
their Gods a begging. You
may not see some temples but
once in the yeare, some not at
all, some are not permitted to
men, & some are sacred from
women. Some holy ceremo-
nies must be solemnized and
crowned by a woman that
knowes but one man, some
by a common woman; & the is
with great religious enquiry
sought for, which can number
the most adulteries. Why, hee
who makes libation with his
owne blood, and supplicates
with wounds, might he not be
better prophane then religi-
ous in such manner? And hee
that cuts off his virilities with
a shard, were hee not better
violate

violate the Gods then so
please them? When if God
would haue Eunuchs, hee
should not need your making,
but might finde out a way of
procreation for them. Who
doth not by this vnderstand,
that if men were well in their
wits, if they were sound and
entire of their senses, they
would not thus delude them-
selves. But common error
giues herein mutuall patro-
nage. The multitude of mad-
ding people is a Topick place
of defence. Yet this supersti-
tion gaue Empire to the *Ro-*
mans, it encreased them, it
laid them a foundation of fu-
ture greatnesse, raised not so
much by vertue as by this re-
ligion and piety. See if you

But they please
delude

98 *M. Minucius Felix*

please what kind of noble famous righteousness the Romans had in the beginning and cradle of their empire. In their first rising were they not a select band of wicked men, fortifying and encreasing themselves with terror of their immunity? Their first company was collected by erecting a place of sanctuary for rogues; whither resorted the desperate, the criminal, the incestuous, brothers of the blade, and traitors. And *Romulus* their generall and commander, that he might also be chiefe in villany, murdered his owne brother. These are the first sacraments of a religious city, and then to get them wines against all civill custome, they ravish, violate, delude

delude neighbour virgins, already betrothd or promised, and take many woemen from their bed of matrimony, with the parents and kindred of these they ioyne battell, and make effusion of their blood. What is more irreligious, more bold, more presuming of safety then a confidence of wickednesse? Now they begin to driue out neighbours from their possessions, to overturne bordering cities, with their Temples and Altars: force the inhabitants to ioyne with them; by other mens harmes and their owne villanies they get vp. And this discipline of *Romulus*, hath beene to their succeeding Kings and Captaines a common patterne of example.

100 *M. Minucius Felix*

All that the *Romans* hold, that they possesse, and all their colonies they owe to their shameles rapin. All their Temples are built from the spoiles of warre, the ruines of cities, the destruction of the Gods, and the slaughters of Priests. Is it not illusion, and insulting vpon the Gods, to obserue those religions which they haue beaten, and to haue them in adoration after they haue beene lead captiue in victory? For to worship that which you would subdue, is to consecrate sacriledge not Deities. Therefore haue the *Romans* beene as often impious as victorious, and they haue made so many spoiles of the Gods as they haue erected trophies over nations.

nations. Neither are the *Romans* growne to greatnes with religion, but by being safely sacrilegious. For how should they obtaine from the Gods helpe in their warres, against whom they tooke armes, whom they droue out of their habitations, howsoever after they had lead them in triumph, they began to worship them. Or what could these Gods doe for the *Romans*, who had not power to preferue against their armies the people amongst whom they were aunciently worshipped? And wee are not ignorant what manner of nationall Gods the *Romans* had. There was *Romulus*, *Picus*, *Tiberinus*, and *Consus*, and

102 *M. Minucius Felix*

Pilumnus, and *Picumnus*. *Tatius* both found out and did worship the privy Ladye *Cloacina*. *Hostilius* found out feare and paleneffe : then I know not by whom, the feaver had his dedication: such was the superstition which was nourished in that city as they did worship diseases and indispositions of health. And indeed *Acca Laurentia*, and *Flora*, prostitute shamelesse queanes must also be computed into the number both of their diseases and Deities. And is it likely that such Gods as these should in dispight of other Gods amongst the nations dilate the Roman empire? (For indeed they, the *Thracian Mars*, *Iupiter of Creete*, *Iuno of Argos*, of *Samos*, of *Carthage*,

thage, or Diana of Tauris, or the Idean Mother, or those Egyptian rather prodigies then Deities could not defend their owne people against the Roman forces.) Except peradventure amongst the Romans, the chastity of their Virgins was greater, and the religion of their Priests more holy, when frequently, many of their Virgins having easily made a fault with men without *Vestals* notice, haue had a civill revenge executed vpon their incest, and the rest were more happy in wantonnesse then safe in chastity. And where doe your Priests more often hire fornications, treat Veneries, contriue adulteries, then at the altars, and images of the Gods. And no common

104 M. Minucius Felix

resorts of whoererie doe so frequently supply the businesse of lust, as the cells of those, who are officers and guardians of the Temples. And yet, before these your Priests and Virgins were heard of in the world, at Gods pleasure the *Assyrians* had the Empire, the *Medes*, the *Persians*, the *Greekes*, the *Egyptians*, when as yet they had none of your pontificall rites, no brotherhood of Priests to sanctify the fields, no dauncing Priests in honour of *Mars*, no Virgins to attend the Godeesse *Vesta* and her fire, no Priests of augurie, to keepe birds in coopes, to divine the successe of things by their feeding or refusall of meate. For now

his Octavius. 105

I am come to their examination which you say haue beene collected with great labour, not omitted without repentance, and ever obserued with happy successe. Will you say that *Clodius*, *Flaminius* and *Furius* therefore lost their armies, because they would not stay to know whether the barly falling on the ground did make an ominous leaping: yet *Regulus* obserued this ceremony, and was taken by the enemies. *Mancinus* kept this religion, and yet was forct to yeelde to a base submission and captiuity. The chicken did eate for *Paulus*, and yet at the battaile of *Canna*, both he and the greatest part of his army was cut
E 5 downe.

104 M. Minucius Felix

reforts of whoererie doe so fre-

106 M. Minucius Felix

downe. *Cains Caesar* in spight of this divination forbidding him to saile into *Affricke* with his fleete before winter, put forth, and had a faire passage with victory. As for your oracles, how shall I pursue their history? *Amphiaraus* after his death makes answearcs concerning things to come, and yet was he ignorantly betrayed to death by his wife for the loue of a gold chaine. Blinde *Tiresias* must see things future, who could not discerne any thing before him. Old *Ennius* faines answearcs of the *Pithian Apollo* for King *Pirrhus*, when *Apollo* had long before left of to bee a poeticall Prophet. Whose wary doubtfull oracle quickly ceas'd, when
men

men began to bee more civill
and lesse credulous. And *Demosthenes* knowing the impo-
sture of such answaeres, did
complaine that the *Pythian*
Virgin Prophetesse, was cor-
rupted by King Philip. But you
will say that these auguries
and these oracles did some-
times hit on the truth. Al-
though indeed chance may
sometimes seeme in many
lyes to speake as it were to
purpose, yet I will trie to dis-
cover this fountaine of errour
and wickednesse, to shew
whence all this disguise hath
risen, I will even open the
very foundations, and lay them
to a manifest view. There bee
false spirits wandring vp and
downe since with terrestriall
corrup-

104 *M. Minucius Felix*

of whomever doe so fre-

108 *M. Minucius Felix*

corruptions and desires they
lost their celestiall vertue.
These spirits have fore-
gone the puritie of their sub-
stance with a burden and de-
luge of vices, and to comfort
their calamitie, being ruin'd
themselues they neuer leaue
to attempt the distruction of
others, to infuse a depravation
of errour, by inducing evill
religions to alienate with
themselues so many as they
can from the true service of
God. The Poets acknowledge
these to bee cunning spirits,
Philosophers dispute of them,
Socrates was not ignorant of
them, who at the direction
and will of one still present
with him, did decline or vn-
dertake businesse. The Magi-
cians

cians also doe not only know them, but act all the sport of miracles by their helpe. By their inspiration and infusion they worke impostures, making those things appeare which are not, and those things not appeare which are. Of these Magicians *Hofstane* the chieftest both for speech and deed, doth attribute vnto the true God his deserued maiesty, and makes honourable mention of his angells, that is his messengers, who tremble at his word and countenance, he also makes mention of those other cunning wandring terrestiall spirits enemies to mankind. And *Plato* who thought it so great a businesse to finde out God, doth easily discover both these

reports of whoeerie doe so fre-

110 *M. Minucius Felix*

these vnto vs, and in his feasting dialogue strives to expresse their nature. He will haue them to be a middle substance betwixt soule and body, halfe mortall, halfe immortal, compounded with a mixture of terrestiall heavinessse, and celestiall lightnesse. He will haue them cause in us the first incentive sparkes of loue, to informe and slide into mens breasts, to mooue their senses, fashion their affections, and then powre in a fiery heate of lust. Wherefore these vncleane spirits (as the Magicians, the *Philosophers*, and *Plato* shew) lurke vnder consecrat statues and images, and by an inspiration doe gaine with people authority to be reputed.

lix. *his Octavius.* III

his reputed Gods, whiles they
ex- sometimes seeme to possesse
will their prophets, to abide in
sub- temples, to animate the liuers
bo- of the sacrifice, to gouerne
im- the flights of birds, rule lotte-
h a ries, and deliuer oracles in-
ui- volu'd with much falshood.
fe. For they are deceiud and doe
us deceiue, as not knowing truth
of sincerely, nor confessing that
to which they know, to their
ir owne perdition. So doe they
s, draw vs from heauen, and call
y us from the true God vnto
e these materiall things: They
disorder our life, trouble our
dreames, creepe secretly into
our bodies, as being thinne
spirits, forge diseases, terrify
mindes, distort members, that
they may force us to a wor-
ship

...sorte of whoererie doe so fre-

112 *M. Minucius Felix*

ship of them, when after as
sacrifice of beasts, and feasting
at their altars, they seeme to be
appeased, and release, and cure
those whom they had affli-
cted. These are also the causes
of those mad men whom you
see breake forth into the
streetes. Their owne Pro-
phets also are sometimes pos-
sessed when they are forth
the temple, they roule their
heads and rage. These spirits
incite both, although to a di-
verse purpose. And from them
proceede those things of
which you haue before spo-
ken, when *Iupiter* caused a new
celebration of sports accor-
ding to a dreame, when the
little ship did follow the
matrones girdle, when the *Ca-*
stors

stors were seene with their
 horses. The most of you doe
 know, that these spirits con-
 fesse so much of themselves,
 as often, as by vs with tor-
 tments of wordes and fire of
 prayers they are driuen out of
 bodies. *Saturne* himselfe and
Serapis and *Jupiter*, and all the
 the rest of your Gods whom
 you worship, are with griefe
 commanded to speake what
 they are plainly. Neither
 would they lye to there owne
 disgrace, especially when ma-
 ny of you are present. When
 they doe thus confesse truth
 of themselves, then believe
 from there owne witnesse
 that they are euill spirits.
 when we coniure them by the
 only true God, they hardly
 stay.

114 *M. Minucius Felix*

stay in posselt bodys, and either presently leape forth, or vanish by degrees, as the faile of the patient helps, or the grace of Gods minister preuailes, So doe they shunne the presence of Christians, whom a farre of they prouoke in your rioting assemblies. And therefore insinuating themselves into the affections of vndiscerning people, they dare but priuily incite you to a hatred of vs through feare. For tis naturall to hate whom we feare, and to doe all the mischief we can vpon those, of whom we seeme to stand in danger. So doe they forestall your mindes and shut vp your breasts from right vnderstanding, that men vndertake to hate vs before they

lix
they know what we are, least
knowing, they should either
follow our example, or leaue
off to pursue our condemnati-
on. But how great a crime it
is to passe sentence vpon men
vnknowne, vntried, which you
doe, belieue our earnest re-
pentance. For wee were as
you are, and in a blinde stu-
pidnesse wee thought as you:
that Christians did worship
monsters, deuoure Infants,
make incestuous banquets;
neither would wee vnder-
stand, that these fables were
still talkt of, but never searcht
vnto prooffe, when never a-
ny was found to giue evidence
herein, although he was sure
to haue pardon for the fact,
and fauour for the inditement.

And

116 *M. Minucius Felix*

And surely this crime imputed to the Christians was for nothing, as any of them brought in question of his faith, did neither blush at it, nor feare, only repenting that hee had not beene a Christian sooner. Yet wee who did undertake to defend and preserve in iudgement, persons sacrilegious, incestuous, and even *Parricides*, were of minde that these Christians ought not to bee heard speake for themselves. And many times as it were out of pittie did vse on them ragefull cruelty, to force a deniall of their beliefe, that they might not dye; vsing in these things a most perverse triall, not to cleare truth but to extort
falshood,

falshood, when if any did deny himselfe a Christian through infirmity, overprest and vanquished with torment, wee did favour him presently, as if such deniall and abiuring had made sufficient expiation for all his faults. Doe you not see your owne thoughts and actions in vs? When if reason had beene iudge, and not the instigation of those evill spirits, these men should rather haue beene vrged to confesse their incests, adulteries, impious ceremonies, and immolation of Infants, then to vnswear their Christianity. For with those fables haue your spirits filled the eares of ignorant people to raise in them a horrible execration

118 *M. Minucius Felix*

craton of vs : But no wonder
 if you doe not here vrge the
 question, since fame which is
 nourished by dispersion of lies
 perisheth at the declaration
 of truth. Such is the businesse
 of your spirits : they did sow,
 they did foment this most
 false rumour; and from thence
 it is that you heare, our divine
 secrecie should bee an Asses
 head. Who would bee so foo-
 lish as to worship this? Or
 who is not more foole to haue
 this imagination of vs, but
 that you doe all-over conse-
 crate your selues for Asses, by
 worshipping the Lady *Epona*
 in your stable, and sacrificing
 the same Asses religiously,
 to your Goddesse *Isis*? Oxe
 heads also and the heads of
 weathers

weathers you both sacrifice
 and worship. You dedicate
 Gods in shape halfe goates
 and halfe men, halfe Lions and
 halfe dogges; and doe you not
 with the *Egyptians* both wor-
 ship and feede the heyser *A-*
pis? Neither doe you con-
 demne their other religious
 rites appointed to serpents,
 crocodiles, beasts, birds, and
 fishes; and if any kill a God of
 these, hee must by the law
 suffer death. The same *Egypti-*
ans with many of your selues,
 doe not feare *Iſis* more, then
 you also feare the acrimony
 of *Oignions*, nor more trem-
 ble at *Serapis*, then a crack
 sent forth at our neither hole.
 Also hee who tales it forth,
 that wee worship the virili-
 ties

120 *M. Minucius Felix*

ties of our Priest, doth but labour to put on vs their owne brutish behaiour. For these may well bee their sacred ceremonies, with whom all filthinesse is called vrbanity: who envie the licentiousnesse of the stewes, who licke mens privities, and with a libidinous mouth muzzle in shameful parts. Whose tongues are nought in silence, who are sooner weary then ashamed of their immodesty. O the horrible sinne! they admit that voluntary filthinesse in themselves, which younger age cannot brook, nor the basest slave bee forced vnto. The like ordurs, it is not lawfull for vs to heare, & many of vs dare not be of counsell with
such

such
thes
of
whic
lieue
exce
vpon
as yo
tion
cross
ring
feluc
that
son
tall
estee
taine
serab
vpon
help
mane
gypt

such offenders. And you faine
these vnworshipfull thinges
of our chaster modestye,
which we could neuer be-
lieue possible amongst men,
except you did proue them
vpon your selues. Also where-
as you ascribe vnto our adora-
tion a man criminall and his
crosse, in a nearenes and borde-
ring of truth you loose your
selues farre away to thinke,
that with vs a criminall per-
son might deserve, or a mor-
tall man might obtaine to bee
esteemed a Deity. For cer-
taine, hee is a man most mi-
serable, whose hope leanes
vpon mortality, and whose
helpe must needs perish in a
mans death. Indeed the *E-*
gyptians somewhere make
F choice

122 *M. Minucius Felix*

choice of a man whom they
may worship, him alone they
make propitious, him they
consulte, to him they offer
sacrifice; yet hee who is thus
a God to others, feeles him-
selfe a man, whether hee will
or no: neither can hee in de-
luding the conscience of o-
thers, deceiue his owne. Al-
so vnto Princes and Kings,
not as to great and choice men
(for this is lawfull) but as vn-
to Gods, your flattery doth
shamefully giue adoration;
when to a right worthy man,
honour more truly, and to an
excellent good man, loue
more sweetly is due. So they
call on their Deity, suppli-
cate their statues, implore his
Genius, that is, his spirit: and
safer

safer it is with you to fore-
swear by *Iupiter* then the
Genius of a King. Crosses we
neither worship nor pray vn-
to. But clearely, you who
consecrate Gods of wood,
doe peradventure adore woo-
den crosses, as parts of your
Gods. For your ensignes, and
your Eagle, and banners of
the armies, what are they but
guilded and adorned crosses?
Your victorious trophies haue
not only the similitude of a
simple crosse, but they imi-
tate the very person of a cru-
cified man. Indeed naturally
we see in a shippe the signe
of a crosse, when she is carri-
ed vnder full sayles, or when
she glides along with an ex-
pansion of oares, and when

124 *M. Minucius Felix*

the tongue of a waine or the
sweape of a coatch is erect-
ed, there is the signe of the
crosse; likewise, when a man
spreading out his hands to
heaven doth with pure minde
beseech Gods mercy. so are
your reasonable occasions, or
your religions formed with
the crosses signe. Now I
would willingly meete with
that man, who either saies
or belieues that we are initi-
ated with the slaughter or
blood of an infant. Doe you
thinke it possible, that our
hearts should bee so hard as to
wound mortally such tender
litle members? Can any man
be so savage as to strike, powre
out, and exhauste the halfe
blood of a young tender child,

that

that is scarce yet mankinde?
No man can belieue this but
such a one as dares doe it. For
I see you expose vnto beasts
and birds, children begotten
by your selues, sometimes
with a lamentable sort of
death strangle the litle chil-
dren. There bee Mothers a-
mongst you who in their own
bowels doe with potions ex-
tinguish the hope of chil-
dren, and make a Parricide
before they haue brought it
forth, & these things are from
the discipline of your Gods.
For *Saturne* did not expose,
but deuoure his Sonnes:
wherefore in some parts of
Affrick, children are to him
sacrificed by their parents,
kissing and colling the Infants

126 *M. Minucius Felix*

sportfully, that the sacrifice may not be with lamentation. It was a custome with the *Pontick Taurians* and the *Egyptian Busiris* to kill strangers in sacrifice, and with the *Gaules* to make humane or rather inhumane oblations. The Romans did interre in the earth a liue sacrifice of a *Graecian* man and woman, with *Gaules* likewise, and at this day the latiall *Iupiter* is worshiped with homicide: And that which well enough be-seemes the sonne of *Saturne*, a wicked and criminall man, he is glutted with blood. Peraduenture hee taught *Catiline* to league his coniuration in blood, to imbrue with mans blood the Goddesse *Bellona*:

Bellona: and with the blood of a man to heale the falling sicknesse seemes his prescription, a cure greater then the disease. Nor are they much lesse barbarous, who from the publique sand taking beastes bedaubd and infected with the blood, garbidge and members of men, haue the stomach to deuoure them. Tis not lawfull for vs to see homicide, nor heare it, and wee are so afeard of humane blood, that even our tables know no service made with the blood of beastes. And that fable of an incestuous banquet is certainly a lie forgd at a consultation of your spirits, to maculate the glory of our chaste life with an aversion of such dif-

F 4. formed:

128 *M. Minucius Felix*

formed infamy; with the terror of it to keepe men off from enquiring the truth. And your *Fronto* delivers not this as a witnesse but as an oratour, to raise vpon vs a contumelious aspersion. These are things more properly belonging to your owne superstition: it is amongst the *Persians* sufferable by law for children to mingle with their Mothers; with the *Egyptians* and *Athenians*, brothers and sisters marrie legally. Your Annalls and tragedies glorie in incests, which you willingly read and heare: and so you worship incestuous Gods, who haue laine with Mother, daughter, and sister. Incest is therefore often deprehended amongst

amongst you, and ever committed: also many times you may vnwillingly rush vpon these horrors, whilest you scatter your *Venery* promiscuously, whilst you every where sowe children: whilest also those who are borne at home, you doe frequently expose to the mercy of strangers, it is not possible but your lust must often light vpon your owne children. So hauing your selues no conscience of incest, you doe the more easily tie the fable of incest vpon our backs. But wee make our chastity good not only in shew but in minde also. We willingly containe our selues in the tye of one marriage. We haue a desire of procreation only, or

130 *M. Minucius Felix*

no desire at all, we keepe our
banquets not only modest but
sober. For we giue not our
selues ouer to feasting nor
protract it with strong drinke,
we temper our mirth with
gravity, with honest dis-
course, and greater chastity of
our bodyes: many doe rather
enioy themselves in the per-
petuall virginity of an inui-
olate body, then glory in it. In
conclusion wee are so farre
from incestuous lust, as many
doe even blush at a modest
coniunction. Neither are wee
presently the raffe of people,
if we refuse your honours and
purples: neither are wee
squeamish in all things, if wee
all be of one good minde, and
and come together in our con-
gregations.

gregations with a quiet privacy: nor doe wee prate in corners, although you either shame or feare to heare vs in a publique assembly. And that our number doth every day encrease, it is no criminall imputation of errour, but a praise-worthy evidence of our truth. For a faire kinde of living doth both retaine vs, and invite others. Wee discern not one another by markes of body as you thinke, but by apparance of innocent and modest life. And that which grieues you to see, we liue in mutuall loue, because wee know not how to hate: and so, to your envy, wee call one another brothers, as being seruants of one God our Father.

132 *M. Minucius Felix*

Father, consorts of faith, and
coheires of hope; when you
proudly doe disdain to ac-
knowledge others, and rage
with mutuall hatred, neither
owne any for brothers but by
Parricide. But doe you ima-
gine wee hide our worship,
because wee haue no Tem-
ples, no Altars? what image
then would you haue vs frame
for God, when if you rightly
consider, man himselfe is
Gods image? what Temple
shall I build vnto him, when
this whole world his worke
cannot containe him? and
and when I that am but a man
reioice to liue more freely,
shall I include the power of
so great maiesty in a small
shrine? Is hee not much bet-
ter

*Like
Faustus
answer
to it
Augustine*

ter in a dedication of our minde, in a consecration of our inmost breast? What great or lesse sacrifice of beastes shall I offer to God, which he hath created for my vse? This cannot bee a thing of gratefull acceptance; but the more winning oblation must bee a good intention, a pure minde and a sincere conscience. Hee who loues innocency, doth supplicate vnto God, hee that loues iustice, doth him libation, he that abstaines from deceit, makes God propitious, and whoever rescues a man from danger, makes the most glorious sacrifice. These are our sacrifices, these are holy things with God: so beewith vs is

most

134 *M. Minucius Felix*

most religious that is most
iust. But wee doe not shew
the God wee worship, nor
doe wee see him? Nay there-
fore wee belieue him to be a
God, because wee can per-
ceiue him, though wee see
him not. For in his workes
and in all the motions of the
world wee ever behold the
presence of his power:
when heethunders, when he
sends forth lightning, when
he strikes with thunder, when
he cleares the aire. Neither
ought you to wonder if you
doe not see God. All things
are driuen, hurld, and shaken
with blasts of winde, yet the
wind, the blasts, come not vn-
der our sight. Hardly can wee
endure to see the sun which is
cause of sight to al, for his rayes
keepe

keepe off our sight and dimme
the eyes of the beholder : and
if you gaze on it any long
while, it exstinguisheth the
sight. How then may you
sustaine the creator of the
sunne, the very fountaine of
light; when from his light-
ning and thunder you hide
your selues? you will see God
with your carnall eyes, when
you cannot see your owne
soule by which you liue and
speake. But God knowes not
mens actions and being seated
in heauen, either he surveyes
not all, or he is ignorant in
many particulars? O man thou
dost erre and art deceiued.
How can God be farre off,
when all things in heauen and
earth, and things beyond this
province

136 *M. Minucius Felix*

province of the world are all full of God? he is euery where not only neere but infused into vs. Looke againe vpon the sunne he is fixt to heauen, yet he sparkles himselfe through all the earth, he is alike present euery where, and he is mingled with all things; for his clearenesse is never violated. How much more then must God the author of all things, and overseer of all things, from whom there can be nothing secret, bee present in any darknesse, even in the greater darknesse of our thoughts. Wee doe not only liue vnder him, but as I had almost said, we liue with him. Neither toye we an argument from the great multitude

rude of our selues : to our
selues wee seeme many, but
to him wee are but few. We
distinguish kindreds and nati-
ons : all this world is but one
house to God. Kings know
the affaires of their state by
the ministry of officers, God
needs no intimation ; we liue
not only in his eyes but in his
bosome : if you say that it no-
thing profitted the *Jewes* to
worship this one God in the
greatest height of superstition
with Altars and Temples, you
erre out of ignorance, vnwiti-
ting their ancient glory, and
only minding their later cala-
mities. For as long as they
worshipped our God (who
is the God of all) chastly, inno-
cently, religiously, as long as
they

138 *M. Minucius Felix*

they obeyed his wholesome precepts; of a few they were made innumerable, of poore rich, of slaues Kings; a few of them vnarmd, did pusue great flying armies, and beare them downe, the very Elements at Gods command fighting for them. Read over their stories, or if you are more pleasd with the *Romans* relation, to passe by the more auncient, see *Flavius Iosephus* or *Antonius Iulianus* concerning the *Jewes*: you shall then finde that they deserued their evill fortune by their wickednesse: and that nothing happened vnto them which was not foretold, if they should perseuere in their rebellion. You shall perceiue
that

that they did first forsake
God, before he forsook them;
and that they were not as you
impiously deliver, taken cap-
tive with their Gods but by
him yeelded vp, as men for-
saking his discipline. As for
the conflagration of the
world, that fire shall fall on a
suddaine; or to believe this
thing possible, it is the com-
mon receiued opinion. And
for the wiser sort of men, who
of them doubts, who is igno-
rant, that all things which
haue a beginning must haue an
end, and all that is made must
likewise perish, and that hea-
ven with all things contained
in it must end as it beganne.
Tis the constant opinion of
the Stoicks, that the heavens
are

140 *M. Minucius Felix*

are nourished with the exhalation of fresh and salt waters, and must passe away with a violence of fire, when all this world in a consumption of the moisture shall burne with flames. And for the conflagration of the Elements and the ruine of the world, the *Epicureans* are of the same minde. *Plato* saies the parts of the world are sometimes drowned with waters, sometimes burnt with fire; and when hee saies, that the world was made perpetuall and never to bee dissolued, yet he addes, that to Gods power it is both mortall and perishing. So then it is no wonder, if this great heape of things bee destroyed by him who pleased to make it;

it; & Philosophers dispute the
same things with vs; not that
we follow their steps; but that
they from the divine predi-
ctions of the Prophets haue
intermingled a shadow of
truth in their writings. So also
the chiefe of your wise men,
first *Pithagoras* and especially
Plato deliuered though in a
corrupt skant manner the
condition of our liuing againe.
For after a dissolution of our
bodies, they will haue our
soules remaine perpetually,
and make a diuers transmigra-
tion into new bodies; and to
distort the truth they adde,
that the soules of men must
returne into tame beastes, in-
to wilde beastes and birds.
Certainly this their opinion
is

142 *M. Minucius Felix*

is not worthy the serious study of a Philosopher, but resembles the contumelious jesting of a stage. But for our purpose tis enough that wise men doe in this also somewhat agree with vs. And can any bee so foolish or brutish, that he dare deny it as easie for God to reforme men anew, as to frame them in the beginning? Are they nothing after their death? So were they nothing before their being; as they were borne out of nothing, why may not they out of nothing be repaired? Moreouer it must needs seeme more difficult to beginne that which was not, then to reiterate that which was. Doe you thinke that things perish to God, because
cause

cause they are withdrawne
from the view of our eyes,
every body whether hee bee
dried into dust, or dissolued
into water, or clodded into
ashes, or extenuated into va-
pour, is taken indeed from vs,
but may still bee reserued vn-
to God the keeper of the Ele-
ments. Neither doe wee as
you thinke feare any losse in
a sepulture of fire, but wee
frequent rather the more au-
cient and better custome of
interring, out of a civil confide-
ration. See how nature every
where doth as it were for our
comfort point out a future re-
surrection. The Sun drownes
it selfe in the waues, and rises
again, the starres slide away,
and returne, the flowers dye
and

144 *M. Minucius Felix*

and spring againe. The bushes
cast their leaues, and againe
grow greene, and seedes if
they doe not rotte cannot re-
ceiue a new growth: so our
bodies like trees in the win-
ter they hide their greenesse
in a drie disguise. Why doe
you make such hast, will you
haue trees renew their green-
nesse in the depth of winter?
So must our bodies expect
their spring. And I am not ig-
norant that many out of a con-
science of their ill deseruings,
doe rather wish to bee no-
thing after death then belieue
it: for they had rather bee vt-
terly extinguisht, then returne
to a reparation of torments.
These mens error is in-
creas'd by the licentiousnesse
of

Of the world and the great
patience of God, whose iudg-
ment the more slowe it is, the
more iust it will be. yet are
they put in remembrance by
the books of the most learned
men, and the poets verses, of
a fierce flood and the often
circling heate of the Stigian
lake prepared for eternall
punishments, as the tradition
is from their spirits owne no-
tice, and the oracles of the
prophets. And therefore *king*
Jupiter himselfe he sweares
religiously by those fierce tor-
rents and the blacke gulfe, at
which ordained for the pu-
nishment of him and his wor-
shippers he trembles before
hand, seeing these torments
haue neither measure nor en-
ding.

146 *M. Minucius Felix*

ding. There the wise fire burnes the body & restores it, it rends and repares: as the flames of lightning blast the body and not consume it, as the fires of *Aetna* and *Vesuvius*, and other burning earths, still flame and spend not: so that penall fire is not fed with the empairing of those that are burnt, but nourisht with the everlasting torture of their bodies. And that they are thus worthily tormented for impious and vniust, who doe not know God, none but a profane man can call in question; when it is no lesse sinne not to know, then to offend the Father and Lord of all things. And although not knowing God bee sufficient
cause

cause for punishment, as the knowing him may availe for pardon, yet if wee Christians for point of life bee compared with you, howsoever your discipline in many things is beyond ours, wee shall bee found assuredly the better men. For you forbid adulteries and doe them: wee only in this kind are knowne men by our wiues. You punish crimes committed, with vs thoughts are guilty. You feare others that are conscious of your sinnes, we feare our own conscience, without whose peace wee cannot enioy our selues. In briebe the prisons are fild with your numbers; there is no Christian but whom you make guilty of his

148 *M. Minucius Felix*

religion, or who hath departed from this. Nor let any man seeke comfort or excuse for his sinnes in destiny. For if there were a God of destiny as you enshrine him, yet the minde is free, and the action not the person of a man must suffer iudgement. And what is destiny but that which God hath forespoken of vs? Who when he might foreknow our conditions, hath determined of every one of vs, according to our merits & quality. So is not our natiuity condemned, but punishment is appointed for the ill nature of our disposition. And thus in few words enough of destiny, of which I haue more largely and truly disputed in another place.

place. Then whereas you say the greatest part of vs are poore, this is not our infamy but glory : for as the minde growes dissolute in abundance, so it is confirmed with frugality. Yet who can be accounted poore who doth not want, who gapes not after the goods of other men, who is rich towards God? He is the most poore, who when he hath much desires more. And I will speake as I thinke : no man can bee so poore as hee is borne. The birds liue without a patrimony, the beastes looke but for their daily food : yet these are made for vs, and if wee covet not at all these things, wee possesse them. Therefore as

G. 3

hee

he that travailes a iourney, goes best that goes lightest, so in this waifaring life he is more happy that easily beares his poverty, then he which pants with the burden of riches. And yet if we deemed riches vsfull, we might aske them of God, and hee may out of indulgency bestow something on vs. But we had rather despise riches then be their jealous keepers. We rather desire innocency, and earnestly begge patience of him, wee had rather be good then prodigall: and if wee feelee and suffer in our bodies the casualties of mankinde, this is not a punishment, but an exercise. For valour is hardened with infirmities, and calami-

ty

ty is often the Mother of vertue. And in brieft the strength both of body and minde doth languish without laborious excercise, and all your valiant men whom you praise for example, they haue most flourish in memory for the famous bearing of their miseries. God therefore who is the ruler of all, and who dearly loues those that bee his, doth not despise vs, and hee is able to giue present helpe, although hee seeme to forbear. For in aduersities hee searches and tries our resolution, in dangers hee weighs our dispositions, even to the last hazard of death he questions the wills of men, being secure that nothing can perish

G 4

from

152 *M. Minucius Felix*

from him, and as gold with fire, so are we approued by hard encounters. What a faire spectacle it is for God, when a Christian enters the lists with griefe, composes an endurance against threates, punishments, and torments? When with laughter hee insults vpon the hurrie of death and horreur of execution, when he erects his liberty against Kings and Princes, yeelds only to God, to whom he belongs? When like a triumphant victor he glories over the iudge that pronounces his sentence: and victory it is, when a man hath atchieved that he sought for. What souldier will not more boldly provoke danger vnder the eyes

eyes of the Generall? For none can haue rewardes before hee hath given experiment of himselfe: and yet a Generall cannot giue that which he hath not; he cannot prolong life, though hee can honour a souldiers worth. But the souldier of God, is neither forsaken in his paine, nor endes his life in death, and may bee thought but never found miserable. You your selues doe praise calamitous men vnto the heavens, amongst others, *Mutius Scauola* who when he had mistaken his attempt vpon the King, had died amongst his enemies if he had not showne vnto them such an example of courage in the burning of
2003 G 5 his

154 *M. Minucius Felix*

his right hand. And how many of our men haue endured without out-cries the burning vnto ashes not of their right hand only but their whole body, when it was in their power by deniall of their beliefe to be let goe, and liue freely? Doe I compare the men of ours with *Mucius*, with *Aquilus*, with *Regulus*? The very Children and woemen among vs by an inspired patience of griefe, doe despise and laugh at your crosses, your torments, your wilde beastes, and all your contemptible terrours of punishment. And you miserably will not vnderstand that no man would, either without great reason vndergoe, or could without
Gods

Gods aide abide such torments. Except that deceiue you, because men not knowing God doe flow in riches, flourish in honours, and excell in power. Vnhappy men, these are raisd high, that their fall may bee greater: like sacrifices they are fatted vnto punishment, and like beastes are crownd for slaughter. Some of them are for this lifted vp vnto Empires and dominations that they may sell the dispositions of their wicked foules vnto all licentiousnesse of free power. For without the knowledge of God what solid felicity can there be; which passes like a dreame, and slides away almost before it is possest. Art thou a King?

Thou

156 *M. Minucius Felix*

Thou dost feare as thou art
feared : and although thou bee
guarded with great retinue,
yet art thou but one man ob-
noxious to infinite dangers.
Art thou rich? But fortune is
deceitfull of trust, and with
great provision the short jour-
ney of life is rather burdened
then instructed. Dost thou
glory in thy purples and en-
signes of dignity? Tis a vaine
errour of men, and an empty
pompe to shine in purple, and
be sordid in the minde. Art
thou descended from aunci-
ent nobility? Thou dost here-
in but praise thy parents: yet
are wee all borne of equall
condition, and in truth only
distinguished by vertue. We
therefore who make our esti-
mation

mation only by manners and
modest behauiour, abstaine
willingly from your euill
pleasures, your euill pompes,
and spectacles: the beginnings
of which wee know to bee
vnholly, and the continuance
full of damnable allurements.
For in your racing sports with
chariots, who would not de-
test the mad contestation of
your peoples part taking? In
your fencers, who doth not
abhorre a discipline of mur-
der? In your stage sports there
is no lesse fury, and more ob-
scenity, for now the actor
doth either dilate adulteries
or present them, now in a
wanton manner faining loue
he puts the spectators into
earnest lust: and then disho-
nours

158 *M. Minucius Felix*

nours your Gods by personating their adulteries, their lamentations, their hatreds, then with dissembled griefes, vaine gestures and feares hee provokes your teares. So in a lye you bewaile the deathes of men and loue to behold them in a true execution. And if wee share not the reliques of your sacrificing feastes, and the goblets which are first powrd forth vnto your idols, this is no confession of feare, but an assertion of true liberty. For although every thing that growes as being the inviolable gift of God cannot by your missusance bee condemned: yet we abstaine, least any should thinke we did by this yeelde our selues subiect
vnto

vnto your spirits, or that wee
were something ashamed of
our owne religion. And who
is he that doubts whether
we doe refresh our selues
with the flowres of the spring,
when wee take the rose and
the lilly, and whatsoeuer else
in flowres hath fairenesse of
smell and colour; with these
loose and soft wee strowe our
houfes, and with some bound
vp wee fill our bosomes. In-
deed you must pardon vs if
wee crowne not our heads
with them. For we vse to
draw the ayre of a sweete
flower with our nostrills, not
with our haire and hinder
parte of our head. Neither do
we put garlands vpon the
dead. Rather in this wee
wonder

wonder at you, why you should giue vnto the dead who feele nothing, your torches and your coronets of flowres, when if he be happy he now wantes them not, and misery cannot reioice in flow-ers. But we prepare our buri-alls in the same tranquility with which wee liue. Wee put not on them a fading crowne, but wee expect for them a crowne ever fresh with eternall flowres: wee vse the liberality of our God with moderation, and secure in the hope of future felicity, we are encouragd in confidence of his Maiesty ever present with vs. So wee rise againe to happinesse, and wee in a pleasing contemplation of

of what we shall be. Wherefore let *Socrates* your gibing *Athenian* looke to it, who humoured himselfe in a confession of knowing nothing, howsoever hee be glorious in the iudgement of a most false spirit. Let *Arcefilas*, *Carneades*, and *Pyrrho*, and all the *Academick* multitude perpetually deliberate, let also *Simonides* still put off his resolution; we contemne the browes of the Philosophers, whom we know to haue beene corrupters of youth, and adulterous, and *Tyrants*, and ever eloquent against their owne vices. Wee who pretend not wisdome by a strange habit, but an integrity of minde, doe not speake but liue in a great manner:

162 *M. Minucius Felix*

manner : wee glory to haue
found that which they sought
with great ambition & could
not obtaine. Why are we in-
gratefull? Why are we envi-
ous to our selues, if the true
knowledge of diuinity hath
come to be ripely apprehen-
ded in our age? Let vs enioy
our blessing, & let vs be tempe-
rate in a right vnderstanding :
Let superstition be restrained,
impiety be expiated, true reli-
gion be preferud. When *Octa-
vius* had ended his oration, for
a while wee in an amazd si-
lence did fixe our eyes vpon
him ; and as for my selfe, I
almost knew not where I was
through an excesse of admi-
ration, whereas hee had with
arguments, examples, and
authorities

authorities of reading beautifully deliuered those things, which it is easier to think then expresse: & that he had beaten downe our maleuolent adversaries with their own armor of Philosophy and had shewed truth to be not only easie but favourable. Whilest I did in silence runne over these things with my selfe, *Cecilius* broke forth and spake after this manner. I thanke *Octavius* for the tranquillity in which we are now like to liue, and I repute my selfe happy not expecting the deliuey of your sentence. We haue all overcome, and I am forward to vsurpe the victory. For as he hath overcome me, so haue I made a triumphpe of error, therefore

Therefore to the maine part
 of the question I come in and
 say. That I acknowledge pro-
 vidence, belicue in God, and
 consent to the sincerity of our
 sect. Something yet remaines,
 not quarrellsome against truth
 but necessary for a perfect in-
 stitution ; of which (because
 the sunne is now neare his
 declination) I shall to mor-
 row more conveniently and
 readily be informed by you.
 Then said he, tis to me great
 ioy in all respects ; *Octavius*
 hath done me a pleasure in
 his victory, when hee hath so
 taken from me, the envy of
 being a judge, neither can I
 recompense his desert with a
 verball praise. The acclama-
 tion of one man is but a weake
 testimony.

test
 ow
 spi
 hel
 hap
 we
 pa
 no
 ca
 I
 w
 ar

his Octavius. 165

testimony. God reward his
owne gift; by him he was in-
spired to speake, and with his
helpe he hath obtained this
happy victory. After this
we joyfully and merrily de-
parted. *Cecilins* because hee
now believed, *Octavius* be-
cause hee had overcome, and
I because they both were so
well pleas'd in their beliefe
and victory.

Deo soli gratia.

and victory.

well pleased in their belief
I because they both were so
could he had overcome, and
now believed. Othman be-
pared. Caesar became he
joyfully and nobly de-
happy victory. After this
help he hath obtained this
joined to look, and with his
own gift by him was re-
testimony. God reward us

testimony.

A good Friday thought.

I Thinke how Christ in his
great pleasure tooke
A humane likenesse often in the
booke
Of mans creation, learning as
it were,
How in times fullnesse Deity
could beare
The earnest of our flesh, in it be
borne,
Grow up to three and thirty,
then be torne
With scourges and the crosse, be
crownd with thornes,
Surprizd by treason and revild
with scorns,
Bee buffeted, bee spit on to re-
store
Those cruell actors to his loue
and lore,
From which both they and wee
by serpents wile

I.

A good Friday thought.
In our first parents fall untill
this while
For eating some forbidden fa-
tall fruit,
Figge, Peare, or Apple, which,
I not dispute,
Astonisht with the wonder of
Gods playe,
Amongst the sonns of men, from
whence well may
We name our Gospell. He who
framed all
With one word, might without
a funerall
And passion of himselfe so all
repaire
With one new pleasing breath
and gratefull aire.
But since for humane ransome
he would die,
I thus thinke on the sacred
history,

As

A good Friday thought.

As from the holy Moore I
learne. Behold

the price of mans redemption,
and be bold,

To blesse all nations, Christ
his bloud pourd forth,

What ransom may be equall to
such worthe

What but all tribes of men In-
gratefull they

Or very proud, who dare or
thinke, or say,

Themselves so great, or this so
small, that none,

Should be by such price saved
but they alone.

A Christmasse Caroll.

Since now the jolly season's
by
That giues and takes in curte-
sy,
I than haue nought to giue will
sing
A caroll to our infant king,
The Prince of peace, the migh-
ty Lord,
who all created with a word.
And might so haue mankind
redeemd,
Had not another way be-
seemd,
Which I adore not daring prie
In secrets of Divinity.
Haile blessed Virgin, mother
milde,
Which at this time didst beare
a childe,
Who in the booke of Genesis
Doth bruise the head of ser-
pents hisse,

And

A Christmasse Caroll.

And so as in allegorie
Would their embleme Grand-
fire worio.

His cradle was a manger, fed
Where be the serpents, and doe
bed

In lothsome ordure neare, else
place

Should by Mariannes grace
In Herods softest downe haue
beene

For a fairer Virgin Queene.
Whose burden puzzling natures
eye

Made a new brightnesse shine
in skye,

To guide three wise men rap't
in sense,

With gold, with mirrhe, with
frankomsense,

From their Starre-gazing Ea-
sterne stage

To Bethlem in holy pilgri-
mage.

When

A Christmasse Caroll.

When round about poore silly
swaynes
Grazing their sheepe on neigh-
bour plaines,
Gods glory first by night did
show,
And from an Angell let them
know
Tidings of ioy to all mankind,
Which they in Davids towne
should finde.
A smadling childe amongst
beastes stord,
A Saviour which is Christ the
Lord,
Borne King of Iewes and Gen-
tiles all,
Who in full time united shall
Humbly vnto him bend, and
praise,
His triumphe with eternall
layes.
Of many proofes which make
beliefe

72

A Christmasse Caroll.

In Christ so borne, this one is
chiefe.

The Iewes who scorned his lowly
birth,

Are scattered over all the
earth,

Infalſe Christs oft by thousand
loſt,

From on land no another toſt.

Their Priests, Scribes, all Je-
ruſalem,

Which troubled were at birth
of him,

Have loſt their Tribes, their
Temple, ſtate,

A people, outcaſt, runnagate.

Now for one thousand thirtie
one

And full ſix hundred yeares
vndone.

Bleſt infant, ſacred Deitie

So ſtrounded in humanitie,

Preſerue this new yeare to my
friends

H 3

From

A Chistmasse Caroll.

From thoughts ill ravelld into
ends.

Vouchsafe mee and my slender
rimes,

Not fawning on these faining
times.

Then shall I on thine Altar
ly

In Antheme of Ascending day,

As erst I haue at Easter done,

Thy Threnothriambeuticon.

A Hymne on Christs ascension.

TO thy passion and thy
birth

Blest Lord I haue two anthemes
sung,

Once more to sing in holy mirth

Thy ascending glory loose my
tongue,

That

on Christs ascension.

That I with wonder and with
praise,

May sett forth all thy holy daies

Borne lowly, then on shamefull
Crosse

By Iewes and Romans iudgd
to dye,

In birth or death not any losse,
Empeacht thy immortalitie.

Like Phebus after cloudes of
raine,

Thy God-head lustred forth a-
gaine.

Ascending thou to men didst
giue,

To meanest men such guifts of
grace,

As whether they did dye or liue,
They forc't all hearts in highest

place,

To prostrate scepter, sword
and crowne With

A Hymne

With worship to thy chiefe re-
nowne.

Poore fishermen of lakes that
were

Unapt to sway with eloquence,
That knew not how to menace
speare,

Or blandish words that ravish
sense,

Even these poore Heralds voyce
did tame

And winne all nations to thy
name.

When I am lifted up saith he
In holy Gospell of saint John;
Then all men will I draw to me
That is to his confession.

To heauen from cratch and
crosse he went,

With men and Angells merri-
ment.

Tri.

on Christs ascension.

Triumphant lord no tongue, no
thought,
Can reach the wonder of thy
wayes,
But we must say as Paul hath
taught,
Unto thy everlasting praise,
The mysterie of godlinesse
Is such as no tongue can ex-
presse.

God in the flesh made manifest
In the spirit iustified.
Seene of the angells euer blest,
To the Gentles verified.
Believd on in the world his
story,
Was vp receined into glory.

FINIS.

On Christ's Resurrection

Triumphantly forth he comes,
thought,
Can reach the wonder of thy
But never (as Paul said)
Was thy conquering spirit
The mystic of Godhead
Is such as we tongue can ex-
press.

God in the flesh made manifest
for the first time
Scene of the angels' awe
To the Gentiles verified
Beloved on in the world his
That up received into glory

FINIS

